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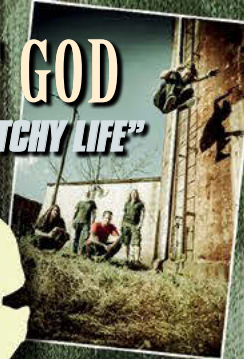
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#262

# TERRORIZER



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# EDITORIAL

##262 JULY 2015

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### AWARDS

Print Media Management

'Innovation in Publishing' Award 2005 - Highly Commended

ACE Press Awards

'Circulation Excellence and Endeavour' - Gold, 2008



It is good to see the tides of extreme music changing, in more ways than one. A quick glance at our crucial cover artist/album of the month axis this issue is very revealing of the many exciting things that are currently happening in our often insulated universe of subgenres. First of all, and perhaps most important of all, here we have two supremely talented women, Myrkur and Chelsea Wolfe, carving their own path by strength of their talent alone, leading their respective genres, be they black metal, folk, gothic, doom or whatever you want to call them – even by the unclassifiable nature of their art you can tell already how restlessly creative and innovative they are – into wherever it is they will go next, for everyone else to follow. In a world where metal is often held up as a misconstrued example of a sexist subculture, it is very nice to hear an opinion from the “inside”, as it were, stating the opposite, with Myrkur remarking on how pleasantly surprised she was with the egalitarian gender posture she has found since switching into our musical world, especially when compared to pop music. And she has bossed around some of the toughest Norwegian dudes around to get 'M' done the way she, and she alone, wanted it, so she knows. A lot of work remains to be done and countless mentalities still need to be changed, yes, and to tackle this subject in any depth would require another issue of the magazine, but it is great to see extreme music being hailed, for once, as an example in the way it deals with problems which are transversal to our entire society. Regardless of gender, race, age, nationality, sexual orientation or any other fictitious barrier people use to divide one another, we should all unite to celebrate the fantastic music we have been lucky enough to have been hearing lately, be it Myrkur, Chelsea Wolfe, or any of the other heavyweights we're covering this month. As a meme that's been going around says wisely, “Don't judge people by skin colour, religion or sexual orientation – Judge them by the contents of their record collection!” Stay with us and we'll pass this particular judgement together, with flying colours.

JOSÉ CARLOS SANTOS



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WHAT TEAM TERRORIZER HAVE BEEN SCARING THE NEIGHBOURS WITH THIS MONTH...



MIRANDA YARDLEY

(PUBLISHER)

LYCHGATE  
AN ANTIDOTE FOR THE GLASS PILL  
BLOOD MUSIC



DARREN SADLER

(CONSULTANT EDITOR)

MYRKUR  
'M'  
(RELAPSE)



KEZ WHELAN

(PRODUCTION/REVIEWS EDITOR)

WITCHSORROW  
'NO LIGHT, ONLY FIRE'  
(CANDLELIGHT)



JOSÉ CARLOS SANTOS

SENIOR WRITER

SKEPTICISM  
'ORDEAL'  
(SVART)

STAFF CUTS



ISSUE 263 ON SALE 27TH AUGUST

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NEWS FROM THE

ORANGE GOBLIN  
PIC: LEIGH VAN DER BYL

# THE MUST-SEE SETS AT BLOODSTOCK 2015

IF YOU NEEDED ANY REASONS AS TO WHY BLOODSTOCK 2015 IS AS ESSENTIAL AS EVER, HERE'S WHERE YOU'LL FIND THE TERRORIZER TEAM OVER THE COURSE OF THE WEEKEND!

## OPETH

SATURDAY AUGUST 8 - RONNIE JAMES DIO STAGE

Over the years, Opeth have become recognised as much for bucking popular trends and the ideas other bands drape themselves all over as they have been for their classic-riddled discography. Let's be thankful Mikael Åkerfeldt and his dusty jacket-worshipping mates have both kept an eye on the calendar and have decided not to say no to the celebration of 25 years of re-writing metal's rulebooks. Come on out and celebrate with selections cherry-picked from eleven albums worth of gold.

## OVERKILL

FRIDAY, AUGUST 7 - RONNIE JAMES DIO STAGE

These NY/NJ bruisers have been going at it full steam since the days dinosaurs snacked on gullible ark-builders and over the past handful of years, their career has caught a fiery second wind following a small handful of amazing releases. Fifty-plus year old men shouldn't be playing thrash this furiously and shouldn't have abs this ripped. Come see where the real fountain of youth begins and ends.

## NAPALM DEATH

SATURDAY AUGUST 8 - RONNIE JAMES DIO STAGE

C'mon people; it's Napalm Death. The granddaddies of grind. One of the most revered bands in existence. Oft touted as one of the best live bands around, they keep getting better, both musically and in terms of the visceral intensity they convey. If you haven't seen them yet, well, we're not sure we believe you. But if that's true, here's the chance to rectify that grievous error.

# BULLET POINTS

**Pagan Altar** vocalist Terry Jones has sadly passed away. In a statement on the band's Facebook page, bassist William Gallagher said "Today 15th May 2015, Terry Jones of Pagan Altar lost his battle with cancer. Terry has been fighting this disease for over a year and

even though I knew it was coming it's still come as a great shock. I have so enjoyed the great times in the studio composing and performing music, travelling the world and being his friend. Terry, you have been the greatest inspiration in my life and I'm going to miss you so very much. I will never ever forget you and will always hold my memories

of you dear to my heart. I will forever be your bass player and we will perform again together one day in the afterlife in the sky. Goodbye my friend..." Terry's contributions to doom and metal as a whole with Pagan Altar over the years have been enormous. He will be greatly missed.  
[www.PaganAltar.co.uk](http://www.PaganAltar.co.uk)

● Psychedelic doom quintet **Space Witch** will be taking their acid-fried riffs on the road this August, calling at Wigan, Bristol, Liverpool, Nottingham, Manchester and Bradford. Check out the Terrorizer website for the full list of tour dates. [www.Facebook.com/SpaceWitchSludge](http://www.Facebook.com/SpaceWitchSludge)



NAPALM DEATH  
PIC: CHRISTIAN REVEL

## KORPIKLAANI

**SATURDAY AUGUST 8 - RONNIE JAMES DIO STAGE**

These trolls from the magical land of reindeer meat and endless summer sunshine (a.k.a. Lahti, Finland) may fall rather neatly into the whole Pagan metal world, but where this lot differ when stacked up against peers and countrymen is in the more pronounced sense of fun – drunken or otherwise – they express through their music. Think about it: a festival setting; free flowing brews; a bunch of jocular Finns with folk rhythms and an accordion in tow... just try and wipe the smile off your face.

## NUCLEAR ASSAULT

**SATURDAY AUGUST 8 - RONNIE JAMES DIO STAGE**

While the chance to witness any metallic legend in the flesh for what may be the first time for some, as well as the last for others, is always an attractive proposition, early reports from overseas pertaining to the recent Nuclear Assault 'reunion' shows have been on the wrong side of positive. However, even veterans need time to get back into the swing of things and by the time the thrashers hit Bloodstock they'll have had a few more gigs in the bank. Check 'em out to see how they bounce back, if not to hear classics like 'Brainwashed' and 'Hang The Pope'.

## ORANGE GOBLIN

**SUNDAY AUGUST 9 - RONNIE JAMES DIO STAGE**

Any time one gets the opportunity to witness Orange Goblin's furry man-mountain of a frontman, Ben Ward, perform in a venue or on a stage where slamming his coconut on low-hanging beams or drop ceiling tiles isn't a concern is a good thing. Stop by the main stage on Sunday to see Ward and his long time mates throw caution to the wind.

## AGALLOCH

**SUNDAY AUGUST 9 - RONNIE JAMES DIO STAGE**

There was a time when seeing Agalloch outside the Pacific

Northwest was a rarer sighting than a new Metallica album post-2000. The last couple of years has seen the folk/doom misery merchants expand their wings a bit, to greater effect as reports have been glowing and positive. You never know when people who play music this moody – as well those who have real jobs as English professors, like guitarist Don Anderson does – will retreat to academia or their mist-observed lighthouses and cut off contact with the world. See 'em while you can.

## ARNOCORPS

**THURSDAY AUGUST 6 - SOPHIE LANCASTER STAGE**

One of the ways American comedian Bill Burr extols the virtues of everyone's favourite Governor is thusly: "Anybody here think they can move to Austria, learn the language, become famous for working out, then become a movie star, then marry into their royalty and hold public office?" Clearly Arnocorps know what's up and, as such, pay fitting tribute via the medium of costumed melodic metal. Come witness the fun when they headline the Sophie Lancaster stage on Bloodstock's opening day.

## CONAN

**FRIDAY AUGUST 7 - SOPHIE LANCASTER STAGE**

Having returned triumphant from their springtime laying waste to the colonies, Liverpool's Conan are back on familiar soil and ready to do what they do best. And if the lessons learned from the innate hardships that come from touring America have set in, then expect more anger, ire and bile to well up to the surface when the trio's black tar crush hums and blasts from the speakers.

## OAF

**FRIDAY AUGUST 7 - SOPHIE LANCASTER STAGE**

More and more bands are discovering the virtues and advantages of life as a two-piece. Smaller transport, fewer people to argue with, bigger pieces of an already miniscule financial pie... The reasons are plentiful and almost achingly

obvious. London's Oaf add to that two albums worth of catchy and clever tunes wrapped in wit and staccato homage to Nomeansno and Melvins. And we can't wait to see how it translates in a live setting.

## SEPULTURA

**SUNDAY AUGUST 9 - RONNIE JAMES DIO STAGE**

It's been thirty years since the Third World Posse blasted out of the Brazilian jungle and despite the transformation that has befallen their lineup and sound over the years, you gotta give props to longevity when due. As part of the anniversary celebration, the band has been unearthing gems from their catalogue that go back to their very first release, 1985's 'Bestial Devastation' as well as Motörhead covers and tracks like 'From The Past Comes The Storms', 'Dead Embryonic Cells' and native drum jams. Can you say "chaos down front"?

## GODFLESH

**SUNDAY AUGUST 9 - SOPHIE LANCASTER STAGE**

From the biggest stages at the most open of open air festivals to the tiniest of shitholes on the toilet circuit, a Godflesh show is always an exercise in pure, unadulterated catharsis. With lauded releases still burning in the ears of critics and fans racked up alongside their stellar discography, expect a start-to-finish exhibition of tension and release, if not all out streetcleaning.

## LAWNMOWER DETH

**SUNDAY AUGUST 9 - SOPHIE LANCASTER STAGE**

Even medieval time royalty and ancient Roman leaders needed a laugh. Thusly, they employed court jesters to lighten the mood in between beheadings and orgies. Heck, even that whacko in control over in North Korea watches American comedy flicks to take his mind off the fact the rest of the world hates him. Why can't Bloodstock have its own "turn those metal-hardened frowns upside-down" breather? And why not have the best (read: most ridiculous and asinine) of the lot? Expect a Kim Wilde cover.

## MASTIFF

**SATURDAY AUGUST 8 - HOBGOBLIN NEW BLOOD STAGE**

Mastiff is just one of many unsigned bands featured in accordance with Bloodstock's policy on showcasing new bands from the next generation of metal. This Hull bunch caught our ear with their slinky sludge that truly lives up to the billing of 'A miserable band from a miserable town.' Add to that their own motto of "Volume over talent" and we're looking forward to hearing how calamity couples with such a wry sense of self-deprecation.

Words: Darren Sadler

**Bloodstock 2015 takes place between August 6 and 9 at Catton Park, Derby**  
[www.Bloodstock.uk.com](http://www.Bloodstock.uk.com)



# CANADIAN DEATH METAL GETS A FUNDING BOOST

*Canadian death metal maestros Cryptopsy will soon unveil the first of a series of planned EPs under their own steam*

**L**eaving your record label can often spell disaster but Cryptopsy seem to have experienced the complete opposite. Following their departure from Century Media in 2012 to become independent, vocalist Matt McGachy believes the band could not be in a better position. "The decision to leave Century Media was nothing personal, we like to keep control and be in charge of everything!"

For the band's next musical chapter, Cryptopsy are applying their finishing touches to the first in a series of EPs, 'The Book Of Suffering'. Whilst fans may have expected a full length record, Matt believes a series of EPs gives fans improved and more regular releases of Cryptopsy's unique formula of technical death metal. "It always takes a really long time for us to write music, we are extremely picky and are really hard on ourselves when it comes to writing songs," explains Matt. "We like to push ourselves and include that technical aspect

in the music. We decided to do a series of EPs as it keeps us focused and I am striving for at least three EPs in the next couple of years."

Perhaps what is the most interesting for the band's first chapter in 'The Book Of Suffering' is that this initial EP was funded through the crowdfunding mechanic. "It was something we decided to try and see if our fans would be comfortable with," explains Matt. Whilst crowdfunding websites can be a touchy subject to some, Matt is more than overwhelmed with how the campaign has unfolded. "We need around 20K and we've raised around \$8,000 and it's really interesting as only 300 fans have pledged. It's crazy that 300 people have pledged a total of \$8,000. I'm really proud of that and that really is the focus of the pledge campaign."

With the EP penned for a release in September, for Matt and Cryptopsy the next stage is to tour as much as humanly possible and start writing for



chapter two of 'The Book Of Suffering'. "The boys have a whole bunch of riffs in the bank. It takes a bit longer for me, so for the next instalment I'd say around November we will be ready to go." Watch this space!

[www.Cryptopsy.ca](http://www.Cryptopsy.ca)

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# lamb of god VII

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# studio report

Artist: **Vision Of Disorder**

Title: **TBC**

Studio: **Nova Studio, Staten Island, NY**

Producer: **Zeuss**

Release Date: **"Late autumn"**

Label: **Candlelight**



days, he's always been a great guy. We needed a place where we could all go and not have to worry about travel, planes and schedules. Plus, [producer] Zeuss needed a place to crash. I guess you can say we are very lucky to have some great friends."

## **What can you reveal about new song titles, themes and concepts?**

"A few titles: 'Heart Spy', 'Cut My Teeth', 'Red On The Walls', 'Razed To The Ground'. As for lyrics, I tend to write about the things that go on around me; the state of the world today, all the war mongering, politics, the way it seems like the world is on the fast track to total fucking destruction. I like to go inside my mind, harvest the negative unrest and put it all into the music. For years writing and recording music has been form of therapy me and tends to drift to dark areas lyrically."

## **Having recorded back in the old days and in the old ways, does it astound you what recording technology is capable of today? How have those advancements impacted, helped or hurt V.O.D. today?**

"Yeah, it astounds me in the way that a lot of shit sounds the same within particular genres; things sound too perfect and utterly predictable, which kinda sucks. There aren't too many surprises these days. New technology and music today is a double-edged sword; in some ways, it's amazing because musicians can really get their music out, reach fans and gain ground all on their own. It really has taken some of the power away from big labels and greedy management. I can remember dudes using razor blades to make physical cuts in reel tapes. These days if you have a really slick person tracking your music, you can do like three takes and come back in a few hours and it will be finished. Personally, I want more from my art and music."

## **How does time spent recording today compare to time spent in the studio recording your early works?**

"The earlier days there was way more on the line. We were way more entwined and involved in each other's everyday lives. We practically lived together during the first four records. There was always something stupid going on and it would find its way into the music, for better or for worse. We were also under the gun back then schedule-wise; it was write, record, tour, repeat. It made for some really good music, but it usually created chaos. These days we don't have the worries we once had. We have managed to stay alive through all the crazy shit. When we get to the studio now, it's like an oasis where we can write and get away from the everyday. We are lucky enough to still have fans, producers, and a label to foot the bill..."

[www.Facebook.com/VisionOfDisorder](http://www.Facebook.com/VisionOfDisorder)

**"I LIKE TO GO INSIDE MY MIND, HARVEST THE NEGATIVE UNREST AND PUT IT ALL INTO THE MUSIC"**

## **What would you say have been the most important lessons you learned in coming back and doing 'The Cursed Remain Cursed' and how have they been applied to the new record?**

Tim Williams [vocals]: "That we are comfortable with our place in the world and grateful that we have fans that support us in whatever we want to do. When it comes to getting together and writing music, it's our time to forget the outside world and write what sounds best for us and our fans."

## **Did you do anything different in writing the new album?**

"Well, the biggest difference would be that we wrote the record as a four-piece [guitarist Matt Baumbach has left]. It was definitely something that the guys were a bit concerned with. I personally knew it could be done and that it would permit a certain type of freedom to the writing process. After the first few songs, everyone was on board and we moved full steam ahead. Another difference was that everyone contributed. Some songs were started from just a drum beat, others [Mike] Fleischmann picked up the guitar and came up with some killer ideas."

## **How would you say the new material differs from previous works?**

"Writing as a four-piece has been a huge change within itself; it's been cool, the new songs are different, still dark and obviously heavy, they are more progressive, but not in that trashy metal way where dudes are playing solos for hours. I hear some 'Imprint'-style shit, I hear a lot of parts that are gonna be fun to track vocally and breathe more than some of our previous efforts. I really like where the songs are heading and I don't think these songs will disappoint any of our fans."

## **Rumour has it you're recording at "the large house of a wealthy friend." We're not sure if Frankie Nasso and Nova Studio fits that bill, so if there's anything to dispel and/or set straight, here's your chance.**

"We just got to the studio today and it's fucking amazing! The vibe is going to be great to track the record. It's a huge place, hard to believe things like this exist. At some point, Steven Seagal owned the house! Yes, Frankie had something to do with it. We have known each other since the Bloodsimple [band that formed in early 2000's during V.O.D.'s hiatus]

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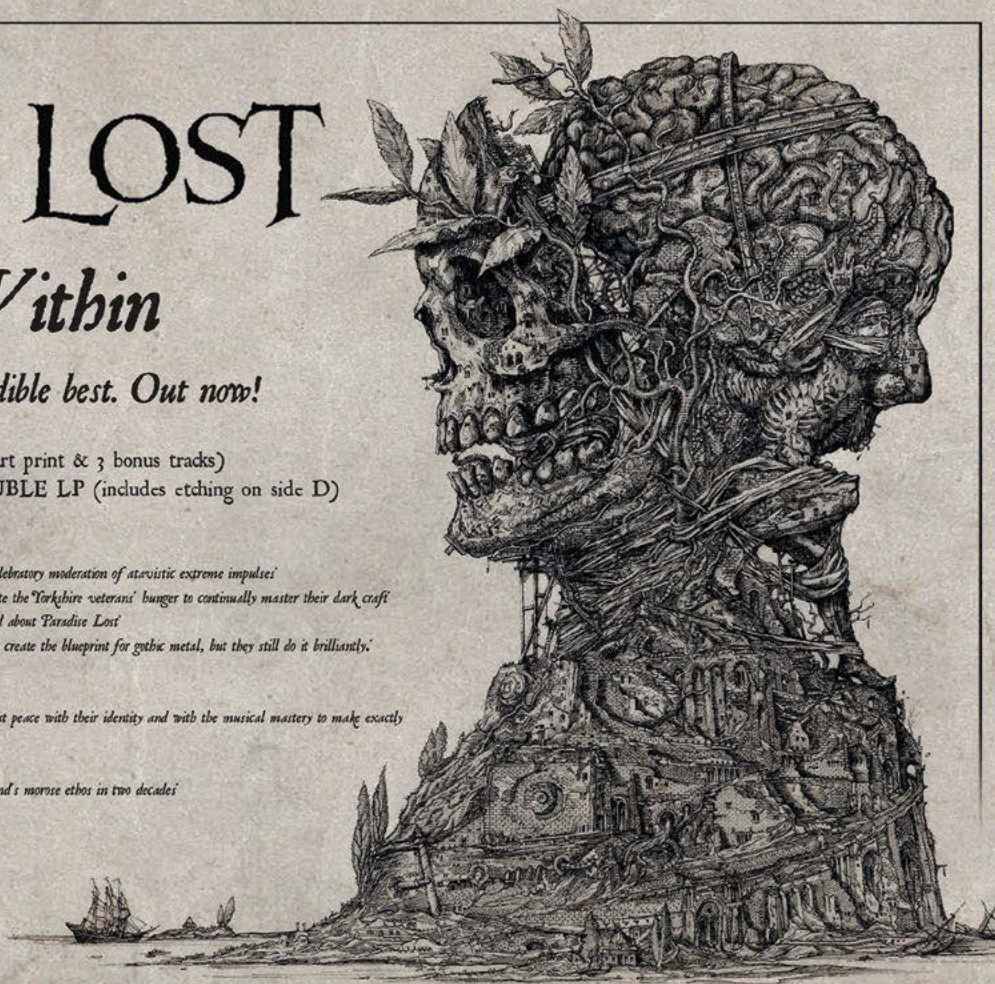
9/10 METAL HAMMER 'Deadly solemn, mature crystalline, elegance counterposed against a celebratory moderation of atavistic extreme impulses'  
4/5 TOTAL GUITAR 'Masterfully blend all eras of their righteous career and best demonstrate the Yorkshire veterans' hunger to continually master their dark craft'  
8.5/10 TERRORIZER 'The Plague Within is a compendium of everything we have ever loved about Paradise Lost'  
8/10 CLASSIC ROCK MAGAZINE 'Serves as a reminder that not only did Paradise Lost create the blueprint for gothic metal, but they still do it brilliantly.'  
4/5 KERRANG 'Best PL album of the century? Yep.'  
8/10 ROCK SOUND 'A masterclass in doom'  
4/5 ZERO TOLERANCE MAGAZINE 'It sounds like a band confident in themselves, at peace with their identity and with the musical mastery to make exactly the album they want without compromise'

LONDON IN STEREO 'Stands as one of Paradise Lost's most creative and diverse albums.'

THE GUARDIAN New opus 'The Plague Within' is simply the most potent expression of the band's morose ethos in two decades

### UK TOUR 2015

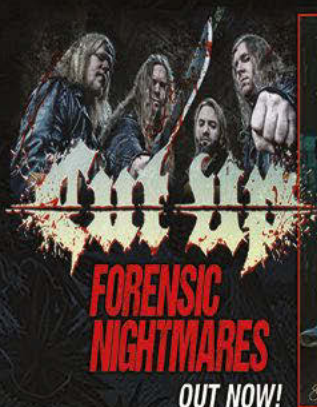
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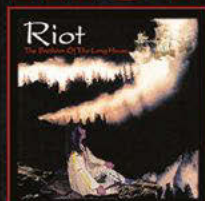
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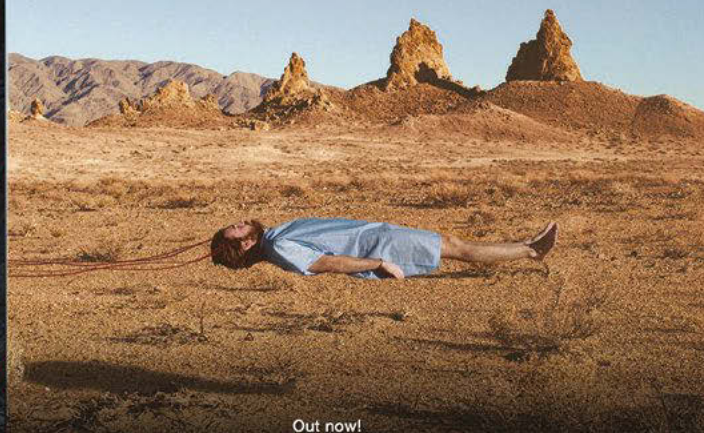


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# ON THIS MONTH'S FEAR CANDY

THIS MONTH'S FEAR CANDY FEATURES A BUMPER SEVENTEEN TRACKS OF EXTREME METAL GOODNESS TO GET YOU THROUGH AUGUST...

## 1. Lychgate

'The Illness Named Imagination' from the Blood Music album 'An Antidote For The Glass Pill' Taken from Lychgate's second album, this is blackened metal at its darkest and most avant garde placing the church organ central to the sound. As well as featuring Esoteric's Greg Chandler on vocals, the organ parts are played by renowned organist Keven Bowyer. [www.facebook.com/Lychgate](http://www.facebook.com/Lychgate)

## 2. END OF SALVATION

'God Of Annihilation' the self-released single. Southerners End of Salvation's shudderingly heavy groove metal is clearly influenced by Down, and their subterranean bass lines underpin interesting guitar ornations and savage vocals scowls. They are currently working on their first album due 2016. [www.facebook.com/EndOfSalvationUK](http://www.facebook.com/EndOfSalvationUK)

## 3. & 4. THE AFTERNOON GENTLEMEN

'Boogechrist' and 'Swirl Night' from the Dead Heroes Records, Bones Brigade album 'The Afternoon Gentlemen' Contributing two tracks and just under two minutes of ferocious grind, Leeds five piece The Afternoon Gentlemen make just the sort of music that got many of us into extreme metal in the first place. Quality. [www.facebook.com/TheAfternoonGentlemen](http://www.facebook.com/TheAfternoonGentlemen)

## 5. SKREAMER

'This Is War', the self-released single. London's metalcore screamers Skreamer have relocated to North Wales and are working on their second album, the follow-up to 2013's 'Blackened Earth'. You can catch them at The Borderline in London on 26 September. [www.facebook.com/SkreamerOfficial](http://www.facebook.com/SkreamerOfficial)

## 6. DAMN CARNIVAL

'Sasquatch' the self-released single. This is one of the first new pieces of music from Brighton's Damn Carnival, a re-imagining of Left Arm Pregnant (which started in 2010). Now a five piece, the band produce heavy rock 'n' roll with a cocky swagger. [www.facebook.com/DamnCarnival](http://www.facebook.com/DamnCarnival)

## 7. FILII ELIAE

'Cimiterivm' from the Lvx Perpetva Records + Productions album 'Cimiterivm' Black Italian doomers Filii Eliae ('daughter of') write lyrics and titles in latin, as if to reinforce their occultish credentials. They were originally formed in 1985 as Mayhem and renamed themselves Enslaved in 1989, would you believe it. [FiliiEliae.Bandcamp.com](http://FiliiEliae.Bandcamp.com)



Artwork: KEN COLEMAN (WWW.ARTOKENCOLEMAN.COM)

## 8. NEW JACOBIN CLUB

'Parade Of Innocents' from the Manticore Music Group album 'Soldiers Of The Mark' New Jacobin Club are a six-piece all the way from Saskatoon, Canada. Their complex dark gothic shock-rock is infused with theremin, electric cello and strong, harmonic vocals. [www.facebook.com/NewJacobinClub](http://www.facebook.com/NewJacobinClub)

## 9. BLEED AGAIN

'Drowning In Dreams' from the self-released EP 'Bleed Again' Another Brighton band, Bleed Again mix hardcore and a bunch of heavy metal sounds from the last twenty years to give the band a captivating sonic palette performed with great energy and enthusiasm. [www.facebook.com/BleedAgainUK](http://www.facebook.com/BleedAgainUK)

## 10. AVULSION RUPTURE

'Apocalyptic Resonance' from the self-released album 'Aglæccraeft' Nottinghamshire black/death metallers Avulsion Rupture make the filthiest noise you'll find on this CD. Amazingly for a band that has been around for fifteen years, they have only just released their first album. [www.facebook.com/AvulsionRuptureMetal](http://www.facebook.com/AvulsionRuptureMetal)

## 11. CHILL

'Recycled Unentertainment' from the Twisted Entertainment album 'Artificially Alive' Hailing from Mänttä in Finland, chILL are produce heavy, grungy rock 'n' roll with classic rock melodic and harmonic guitar breaks to make a catchy sound that, love it or hate it, will have your feet tapping and your head banging. [www.facebook.com/chILLInYourSpine](http://www.facebook.com/chILLInYourSpine)

## 12. AFTERLIFE

'Chains Of Death' from the self-released EP 'Chains Of Death' Now for some thrash! Mixing Megadeth, Annihilator and Coroner with a touch of Dio, Afterlife know how to add speed to their metal. 'Chains Of Death' combines fast breaks with slower lyrical sections, the result being a fine song with an epic feel. [www.facebook.com/AfterLifeFanPage](http://www.facebook.com/AfterLifeFanPage)

## 13. VELVET INSANE

'Break Out Of Eden' from the self-released EP 'Break Out Of Eden' Velvet Insane are a four piece classic rock band from Östersund in Sweden who have the look and songwriting skills to match their reassuringly retro (yet modern) sound. [www.facebook.com/VelvetInsane](http://www.facebook.com/VelvetInsane)

## 14. ANURYZM

'Humanoid' from the Melodic Revolution Records album 'All Is Not For All' We at Terrorizer always strive to bring you quality music from all round the world. Anuryzm are from Abu Dhabi and Dubai in the UAE, and make interesting progressive metal with guitar riffs, harmonies and quirky syncopation, think of a fusing of Karnivool and Testament. [www.facebook.com/Anuryzm](http://www.facebook.com/Anuryzm)

## 15. HIRAETH

'Words To Echo' the single. It's a disservice to call Hiraeth melodic hardcore as there's much more to their sound than just this, as this track shows. Catch the band on their four date UK tour with Black Polaris and Wars starting end of this month. [www.facebook.com/HiraethUK](http://www.facebook.com/HiraethUK)

## 16. STONE EM ALL

'Laser Wolf' from the self-released EP 'Villains' Guernsey four-piece alt-rockers Stone Em All (what? No apostrophe??? - ed) release their second EP 'Villains' from which this delightfully titled track is taken on August 15. [www.facebook.com/StoneEmAll](http://www.facebook.com/StoneEmAll)

## 17. DON GATTO

'Same Shit' from the self-released EP 'Sawbotage!' Chainsaw hardcore Hungarians believe in keeping things simple, hard and short. 'Same Shit' has an unambiguous message, if you enjoy this you can catch this hard-working band on one of many of their European dates. [www.facebook.com/DonGattoHC](http://www.facebook.com/DonGattoHC)



LYCHGATE

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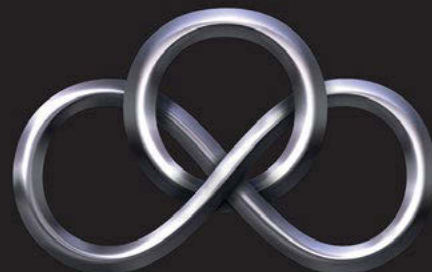


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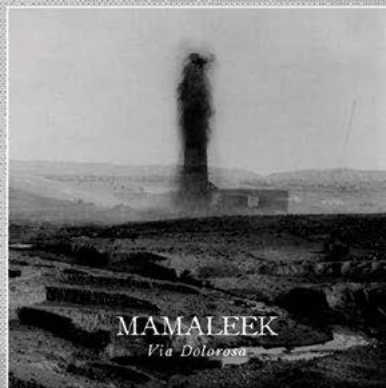
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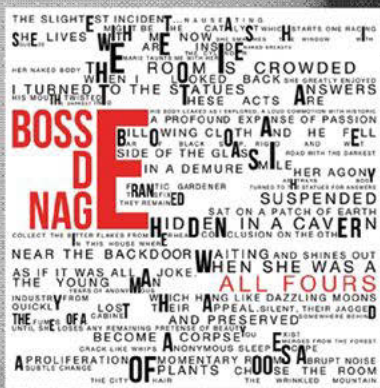
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# CHOICE CUTS

BLOODY CHUNKS OF  
THE CULT, THE KULT  
AND THE FRESHLY DEAD



## TERMINAL CHEESECAKE

*"WITH A NAME LIKE OURS YOU CAN'T STAND FOR ANYTHING TOO  
FUCKING PO-FACED OR EARNEST"*

When asking for insights into an album's themes and motifs, you don't usually get a long pause, a thoughtful "errrr..." and a nervous chuckle. But then this is Terminal Cheesecake, the band that smashed together sprawling psychedelic freakouts, garage rock and lashings of surreal in-jokes into landmark releases like 'Angels In Pigtails', and whose music is still as baffling and seductive to listen to after all these years after they drifted apart. But since their reunion three years ago, they've been slowly gathering momentum and a live recording 'Cheese Brain Fondue: Live In Marseilles' is set for release alongside brand new studio material. So what brought them back together from years in hiatus while their members played in luminaries like Skullflower?

"It became different as people left, so this full group version of Terminal Cheesecake was something that was unfinished business," guitarist Russell Smith explains of the impetus to reunite. "We all wanted to do it again, just 'cos the name stands for something that other

projects couldn't. It was just a matter of getting the right people to do it."

As it happens, although this is as full a reunion as you can get with a roll call as extensive as Terminal Cheesecake has, founder member Gary Boniface decided not to take up the microphone.

"He didn't really wanna do it anymore. After about ten years of trying to persuade him we gave up!" Russell notes sardonically. Stepping up to the plate, the band recruited Gnod vocalist Neil Francis, who slotted into the line up straight away and they began gigging to small but appreciative audiences. Apropos to the spontaneity that drove them in their first incarnation, the release of 'Live In Marseilles' was typically off-the-cuff and driven by fans. "It was completely by chance," Russell smiles. "We had this German soundguy, and he didn't say, but he announced at the end of the gig he'd recorded it on multitrack. The sound was spot on, the place was spot on, so when we heard it we were like '...fuck!'"

From then on, it was only a matter of time

before the band hit the studio. Recording live as they always have done and jamming out the tracks, it was clear the old magic was back. "It's always such a good laugh this band – you can imagine with a name like [ours] you can't stand for anything too fucking po-faced or earnest. It's just an excuse to fuck about really." If tracks like 'Poultry' and 'Wipey' (showcased on 'Live In Marseilles' alongside old favourites) are anything to go by, fans of surreal noise rock are in for a treat.

"There's a character called Mr. Wipey, he's an ice cream man with the dirtiest hands," the guitarist tries to explain. "It was like recording 'Angels In Pigtails', that mixture of laughter and joy," Pete surmises about the recording experience. "In a way we're sort of trapped with the band's name. I mean we couldn't make a serious album, could we? I suppose we could try..."

STEVE R. JONES

'Dandelion Sauce Of The Huang' is out next year on Rocket Music.  
[www.TerminalCheesecake.com](http://www.TerminalCheesecake.com)




# PISSGRAVE

***"EACH SONG IS ABOUT ME FACE FUCKING YOU TO DEATH"***

**A**ttitude. A poisonous yet valuable gift: face it, even if he has turned into a dickhead over the years, would you have ever checked out Decide in the first place if it wasn't for Glen Benton's big mouth? Death metal has been full

of it and, in the internet age, where most human interactions happen hidden behind a keyboard, even your grandma can pretend to be the most badass motherfucker that ever lived. So it's kind of hard to really know if Pissgrave are the real deal or

not – but you can sometimes judge a book by its cover. And based on their simple yet brutal artwork and spiky logo, one shouldn't be surprised to hear that when asked about the content of their debut album 'Suicide Euphoria's indecipherable lyrics, their guitarist and vocalist's short answer is that "each song is about me face fucking you to death".

With only a handful of live appearances (including a US east coast mini-tour opening for Dead Congregation) and, so far, a limited demo tape whose reputation was mostly based on its absolutely disgusting cover artwork, this Philadelphia lot has remained an enigma since their inception in 2011, apart from agreeing upon the fact it "represents the disrespectful nature of death we explore". And with little desire on their part to make it easy for outsiders ("People's opinions are of no concern to us. The 'scene' mostly consists of lazy, weekend metal listeners anyway. Hipsters, that are so fast to put things in boxes, they can fuck off. We play violent, offensive death metal. We don't aim to write primitive. We don't care") nor to even allow this scribe to link them to the other two bands (Otesanek, Serpent Throne) their bass player Demian is involved with ("those three don't relate to one another and Pissgrave isn't a reaction to any other music I've been part of creating"), Pissgrave probably relish in remaining so. 

OLIVIER 'ZOLTAR' BADIN

'Suicide Euphoria' is out now on Profound Lore



# AUSTERYMN

**A**fter forming in 1990 and going through various different names, Austerymn were born in 2007 with frontman Rik Simpson and vocalist/bassist Steve Critchley at the helm. The duo added Stuart Makin on additional guitar and Nikk Perros on drums, resulting in their debut full-length 'Sepulcrum Viventium' eight years after their inception. "We were really enjoying the music we'd listened to when we started in 1990 such as Autopsy and Death," states Simpson. "I wanted to go back to that and do it justice." And justice has been done; the band are now signed to Memento Mori Records. "We've worked hard to be true to that old school death metal vibe because it's in our blood," Simpson concludes. "We were there at the beginning and now in our 40s we want to ensure we give it the respect it deserves!" [BA] <http://Terrorize.it/b5GP>



# SWORDWIELDER

**T**hese Swedes are obvious fans of old British crust bands such as Amebix, Axegrinder and Deviated Instinct but they also inject a hefty dose of their native kängpunk into their sound. This is apocalyptic, war-torn crust that reeks of the stench of slain enemies scattered across a muddy battlefield – not a pretty sound but one that aptly reflects their debut albums ominous title 'Grim Visions Of Battle'. "We recorded it live in a practice space of a friend," says guitarist Walle. "We wouldn't like to do it any other way than live because we felt we would lose the feeling recording all the instruments separately. We love the old stenchcore crust acts, and thought there were not many bands around doing it without downtuned instruments and growly vocals, so we thought of giving it a shot. And here we are... Still trying." [KG] [WieldTheSword.Bandcamp.com](http://WieldTheSword.Bandcamp.com)



# ITHACA

**I**t's very much about the disintegration of human relationships," says vocalist Djamila ahead of their 7" EP's release. Continuing to grow, Ithaca admit they're not ones for "writing concept records" but have stated that this record has a "lot more emotional depth to it" with Djamila adding: "The songs this time round are a lot darker, rawer and grittier. I drink a lot of Chai Tea, I always think if I am drinking loads of tea, then I'm not going to blow my voice out, but the main issue is that I drink beer and smoke like 40 a day!" she laughs. The EP was produced by Joe Clayton of Old Skin who the band will tour alongside within a couple of weeks. "We're playing a secret house show in Brighton," Djamila smiles. "It was absolutely crazy last time, just loads of people stage diving off of furniture, hands down one of my top five shows" [EB] [www.Facebook.com/IthacaUK](http://www.Facebook.com/IthacaUK)

# CHOICE CUTS

BLOODY CHUNKS OF  
THE CULT, THE KULT  
AND THE FRESHLY DEAD



Pic: MichaelGardella

## THE GREAT DISCORD

***"IT'S ALL SUPPOSED TO  
PRESENT YOU WITH A SMALL CHALLENGE"***

**'D**uende', the debut album from Swedish prog enigma The Great Discord, is a dizzying mix of technical intricacy and lip-splitting violence. "We strive towards balancing complexity with a more immediate and instantly rewarding aspect," reveal Fia Kempe (vocals) and Aksel Holmgren (drums). "You need something that draws you in first before you explore the layers and dynamics."

A key element of this balance is the interaction between vocals and instruments. When the instrumentation gets intense and intricate, the vocals back off, with simple melodies you can hum along to. Then, when the vocals take centre-stage, the instruments take a breather. Parts of the album might reflect the old Malmsteenian phrase 'more is more', but they're few and far between and are used to great effect.


'Duende' is full of twists and turns, sometimes wildly unpredictable, sometimes reassuringly heavy. There is a constant push and pull to the music, and a striking originality. "It's never been our goal to make music that's super-original just for the sake of being different," says Holmgren. "Music is subjective, so

it's impossible to pinpoint what is truly original. Our music is a representation of what we are as musicians, and we are very happy with what we've created. But to deny that the thought of being original is something exciting is to lie – every artist strives towards breaking new ground."

While writing 'Duende', the band began to realise that their unique sound and style didn't really fit into any particular category. "We jokingly labelled ourselves progressive death-pop. Progressive because of the odd time signatures, experimentation and visual wefts. All of us have a strong connection to progressive acts such as Genesis, King Crimson and Pink Floyd. We've taken inspiration from classic prog rock – clean vocals, rhythmical complexity, storytelling – and transformed that into modern metal. Death because we love death metal and our thematic are sprinkled with morbid fascination. Pop because we have the classic verse-chorus-verse pop structure in a lot of our songs."

Pop structures aside, 'Duende' is not an easy-access album, featuring themes centring on the human condition and psychiatric conditions. "The album reflects our band name – a great discord

in our lives. We're all scared of situations that are violent, hateful or evil, but even though people avoid this in real life, we are surrounded by a fascination for it in movies, TV, video games, art and literature. We try to use this fascination for the macabre in our music."

The album makes an immediate impression visually as well as aurally. "The artwork and logo is art deco, a style we all love," says Holmgren. "We were lucky to work with Mattias Frisk on the artwork and at the first meeting Fia made it clear – 'No skulls!' – because we weren't looking for a typical metal style. The uncluttered artwork highlights the sense of impending danger that the smaller figure is experiencing. Behind him, the towering figure represents the darker side of his persona, a towering shadow in his life. And our logo is cohesive but can be tricky to decipher – not entirely unlike our music. It's all supposed to present you with a small challenge." 

STEVE BIDMEAD

The Great Discord's 'Duende' is out now on  
Metal Blade  
[www.Facebook.com/TheGreatDiscord](http://www.Facebook.com/TheGreatDiscord)



# THROES

**"I WOULDN'T EVEN ALLOW MYSELF TO BRING FOOD OR WATER INTO THE STUDIO WHILE WRITING"**

Jarring, dissonant and often harrowing statement about to be projected into the UK underground, 'Disassociation', the debut full-length from industrial-tinged death metal duo Throes, offers a listen often threateningly mechanical, yet still fundamentally human. Beginning as a full live band back in 2011, Throes' untimely split in 2013 became an oddly fortuitous event, leading to an eventual distilling and reinvigoration of the band's creative energy into their current duo dynamic, and subsequently the emergence of 'Disassociation'.

"Throes is a specific reaction to a meeting of two minds," says composer and multi-instrumentalist A.C. "The UK underground is full of some very interesting acts, however we both felt we had something else to offer. We feel more akin to the dirge-like feel of some of the more depressive and dissonant acts from Europe than our British counterparts."

Perhaps inevitably considering it was produced

by a band based between Birmingham and Bristol, 'Disassociation' reeks with the same urban degradation and insanity-bordering isolation that inspired albums like 'Streetcleaner', and as A.C. describes the writing process, it becomes clear the record's atmosphere was reflected in its origins.

"The writing process for 'Disassociation' was very intense," he goes on. "It came from a desolate mind-set. In fact, I wouldn't even allow myself to bring food or water into the studio while the actual writing was taking place... the clocks would all also be offset in the control room - I just wanted to remain focused on the task at hand in venting my thoughts and creating music." ☹️

**RICH TAYLOR**

'Disassociation' is out now on Naturmacht Productions

[www.Facebook.com/ThroesUK](http://www.Facebook.com/ThroesUK)



# WE COME FROM ASHES

Featuring current and ex-members of Suicide Watch, Isolation, Akira Dawn and 300 Degrees Red, We Come From Ashes are an exciting new metal band from Gloucestershire, who successfully mix up punk, hardcore, death and thrash on their debut EP, 'Embers'.

"We're a much heavier beast than our other bands," reckons guitarist John. "The songs have a darker feel to them, with a lot of different influences coming to the fore. Come and see us live - you'll leave with an aching neck!" [IG]

[www.Facebook.com/WeComeFromAshes](http://www.Facebook.com/WeComeFromAshes)



# DEATHRITE

Germany's Deathrite are unapologetic when it comes to what they do. When asked to describe their sound, guitarist Andy exclaims: "Filthy old school death metal with a crusty edge, pretty simple and raw without the fancy technical stuff, just heavy neck breaker riffs!" It's clear that what you see is what you get here. Andy rounds off: "Our plans for the future are pretty simple, playing as much as we can and writing heavy music!" [BA]

[www.Facebook.com/Deathrite666](http://www.Facebook.com/Deathrite666)



# ALDA

"When you truly open your awareness to the environment where you live, the character of that environment becomes inseparable from your consciousness." Speaking of the Cascadia region they call home, Alda's expression of their connection to their surroundings through heartrendingly sorrowful folk/black metal has reached a stunning apex on their upcoming full-length, 'Passage'. Passionate, harsh and weeping with loss, 'Passage' is a major step forward in the band's personal journey as well as their musicianship, as drummer/vocalist Michael Korchonoff reveals. "The song 'Passage' itself addresses the sense of apocalyptic uncertainty that so many feel in these times, but it also carries a reminder that a focused centre must be maintained to navigate any state of calamity - regardless of how bleak the outcome may seem. Finding strength and charting one's path despite uncertainty, adversity and chaos." [RT]

[www.AldaCascadia.Weebly.com](http://www.AldaCascadia.Weebly.com)



# INFERA BRUO

Hailing from the depths of Boston, black metal quartet Infera Bruo - or 'hellish noise' in Esperanto - do exactly what their name suggests. The band consists of musicians with varying backgrounds such as classical, metal and experimental coming together to create an eclectic sound for their latest opus 'In Conjunction'. "'In Conjunction' has a lot of layers to it," explains vocalist and guitarist Galen. "I think it requires multiple listens to get a feeling for what we're doing. It seems that society's waning attention span means more people aren't willing to listen to an album all the way through. You're not going to get the scope of anything in the first two minutes." But it seems there's even more in the works. Galen adds: "We're always working on things within the band as well as various side projects, so expect more music!" [BA]

[www.Facebook.com/InferaBruo](http://www.Facebook.com/InferaBruo)



# PUBLICIST UK

"Given the choice between dealing with Satan and a publicist, I'm gonna run crying to the Devil!" laughs vocalist Zack, when talking about his band Publicist UK's unusual moniker. "And besides, potential listeners put off by a name that good should feel free to partake of this wide buffet of dicks that we have thoughtfully laid out for them!" "I think the album is a good place to get lost in the atmosphere and the tension," says guitarist David of the band's deliciously dark post-punk debut 'Forgive Yourself', "And I think our shows are a good place to rage." [IG]

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# *"If You Have A Talent, If You Practice, If You Work Hard At It And If You Do Things Right, Then Nobody Can Fuck With You"*

SHE HAS PERFORMED AND WORKED WITH BLACK METAL ROYALTY AND HER DEBUT ALBUM 'M' IS EASILY ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT RECORDS IN THE GENRE TO BE RELEASED THIS YEAR.

WELCOME TO THE WORLD OF DENMARK'S MYRKUR

Words: José Carlos Santos

It was inevitable, really, that the identity of that mysterious, lone woman in the grainy photos in the middle of a snowy wood would quickly be discovered. Myrkur's 2014 self-titled debut EP was not exactly a black metal revolution *per se*, but contained every seed for it therein. Pastoral yet fierce, atmospheric yet staunchly to-the-point, it would have made the huge impact that it has indeed made regardless of whoever had been its author. The fact that it was apparently the work of a single Danish woman with no previous known connection to any extreme scene just made it all the more fascinating for most of us – and irritating, and even menacing, to a small but tiresomely persistent number of scene police – and explained the curious purity that emanated from it. A year later, and Myrkur is back with her first full-length, simply titled 'M', and although we now know she is in fact Amalie Bruun – a musician born in Denmark and currently residing in New York, mostly known for her presence in the noise pop duo Ex Cops – nothing has really changed. If anything, 'M' reinforces the growing importance of Myrkur in an increasingly stagnating scene, and this applies to any scene you want to try and fit her in. Its 37 minutes fly by as a fleeting spirit from a Scandinavian forest would, the eleven surprisingly (and refreshingly) short pieces that compose it replete with opaque, skewed beauty, both mystical and elusive, but also frequently harrowing, angry and raw.

"I suppose you can say everything happened very naturally," Myrkur says, with a very discernible Danish accent, about the loss of her initial anonymity. "I didn't really care too much about being anonymous in the first place, I really only cared about people getting introduced to the music through the music, and not in all kinds of shallow ways. But of course, with the internet being what it is and me not really trying to hide anything, it just became that way. It was mostly writers who cared, really, it was more of a headline thing that everybody wanted to talk about. I don't want to lie to anyone, so I had no problem 'revealing' things in interviews, as long as I thought the questions weren't stupid or offensive, I've always replied to everything, no problem there. Sometimes, some people want to talk to me about things that have nothing to do with my music or with Myrkur, that I'm not interested in discussing, but otherwise it's all good."

So that's one thorny question disarmed, with the logical simplicity she

employs in her songwriting. Let's keep myth-busting, shall we? You might have seen somewhere something about Myrkur being a supermodel or some such nonsense, which is simply not the case.

"I'd like to say that I've done one modelling job in my life, with Martin Scorsese, and that's about it," she explains. "I don't really know where this modelling career reputation came from, what I do know is that if I was a successful model I'd have a lot more money and a lot more things published in magazines. I can't help but find it funny when people ask me about those things these days, if I was ever a successful model I can tell you I wouldn't be here living with my mother right now!" she says with a hearty laugh. "It's one thing that I did, and because I'm on an artist visa in the States, a musician's visa, I'm not really allowed to work as a model even if I got any offers. I could only do that one job because it was related to music, and I'd do it again in a heartbeat because it was really fun and Martin is a really cool guy."

The initial question that prompted the previous reply was if having worked in the fashion industry, where image is a constant concern, that might have been a catalyst for the shadowy, almost incorporeal presence Myrkur adopts for this musical endeavours. The few press photos she's released focus more on the nature around her than on her figure, and while that fits

entirely with the mood of her music, it's refreshingly unusual in this day and age. It also robs her detractors of one more argument they might look for, of her using anything other than her music to promote said music. While she rightfully corrected us on the "model" issue, she does admit her shying away from having a more present image.

"That comes from life, really," she reasons. "At some point, as a woman, you do get tired of the attention you get just based on your looks. Some women feed into it, and some women take a distance from it. It is tiresome to be constantly valued as a human being based on different things than what you'd be valued by if you were a man. It's a woman's responsibility to not feed into that. As for me, I've played music since I was born, my parents and my grandparents all played music their whole lives, and I'm very good at it! I've practiced my whole life, I've written songs since I was born, and all I care about is my music. If you have a talent, if you practice, if you work hard at it and if

*"We Wanted To Look To The Future, With Roots Firmly Planted In Black Metal And In Scandinavian Old Music"*



# "THERE'S SO MUCH ROLE-PLAYING IN METAL, PEOPLE IN THEIR BASEMENT THINKING THAT THE GUYS IN NORWAY RUN AROUND BURNING CHURCHES ALL DAY"

you do things right, then nobody can fuck with you.

"What really rubs me the wrong way is that this hipster press like Pitchfork and other useless people, they put model before musician when they talk about me without knowing any facts, and that's really bad journalism," she continues. "It's quite obvious that they do it to shrink me as a musician, and not only is that disrespectful to me, but it's also disrespectful to models, because they work just as hard as anybody else. People have this thing, like, 'you're not ugly, you're a model, right?', as if that's the only thing necessary, whereas I know for a fact that models work as much as any actor or musician or any other artistic profession."

Just to add another nail to the overfilled coffin of things that are made up about Myrkur, here's just one more.

"The other day someone posted something on my Facebook from some site, I think it was Metal Archives, where it said that the only member of the band is Danish, but the band was formed in the United States and it's an American band," she says almost exhaustedly at this point, throwing her hands in the air. "I honestly don't even know what to say to that, where did that come from? At this point I think I should publish my birth certificate and any other useful info so people don't just make up stuff about me. And that's a problem for me, because at the same time I don't want to respond to these things. I don't want to react to passive-aggressive stuff like that, I don't care to address it and that's maybe why there's still so many misunderstandings. I just want to do things."

**T**hese points need very little further elaboration – they're a fact and that's that. What is even more interesting is the fact that, while metal is often seen as a particularly male-centric community, as if that problem isn't transversal to our entire Western society, Myrkur couldn't have been more pleased with what she found in our own little world.

"The good thing is that through music, and particularly through metal and my life in the metal world, I've met equal-minded people, especially people who also play music," she says. "When you go into the studio or the rehearsal space, it doesn't matter what you look like or if you're a man or a woman, because you're just a musician. All musicians respond to other good musicians and you connect immediately. I've done other genres of music and worked with different people and industry people, and it was just until I started working with metal that I've felt this more true respect for music. There's so much image and almost role-playing in metal, that people in their basement with their computer think that the guys in Norway run around burning churches all day, but a lot of those guys take a role, almost like a movie, and even then the music is the only focal point. That's been a very pleasant surprise for me."

This is a rare opportunity we have here – a sort of outsider's view, filled with precious insight, into our often closed community of extreme music by someone who is already on the inside – in fact, more on the inside than most of us will ever be. She doesn't use the example of Norway randomly; as you're probably aware, 'M' was recorded in Norway under the wise guidance of Ulver's Kristoffer Rygg, and features the performances of musicians such as guitarist Teloch (Mayhem, Nidingr), drummer Øyvind Myrvoll (Nidingr) and violinist Ole-Henrik Moe (who has collaborated with Ulver), among others. For a long-time black metal fan like Myrkur, it's an experience that borders on the surreal.

"Once the EP was out, Relapse asked me about a full-length album, but at the time I wasn't really ready for that, I didn't even know if I wanted to do an album," she clarifies. "But then they asked what producer I would

like to work with, if any, and that scared me because I did everything myself on the EP, and the thought of having to delegate work to other people was sort of unreal. So I just told them, I'll only work with one producer and that's Ulver, i.e., Kristoffer. I thought they couldn't get him, but they could. When we started emailing with him, he told us he had heard the EP, that he had liked it, and that he would very much like to produce the album, and that was mind-blowingly weird for me. So him and I started emailing back and forth with a few demos, a few new songs I had sketched and a few old things too, we started talking about sound and the approach to it. None of us wanted to do a throwback record, we both wanted to look to the future, with roots firmly planted in black metal and in Scandinavian old music. That's the mindset I went in with, but because I had such a hard time envisioning how all this could be possible, I just went into the studio not thinking too much about it, it was mostly 'let's just go' and see how it could go. Usually, when I've worked with other people in other projects in my life, I've mostly thought that working with other people can be an obstacle to get to where you were dreaming of going. But in this case, it was odd, because Kris was a facilitator for it to become even more than I was dreaming of, it was a very pleasant surprise, he absolutely knew what I wanted by listening to the demos and shared my vision very strongly."

So, for a while a few months back, a Danish girl was calling the shots with a bunch of Norwegian metal stars around her, a rather bewildering notion for some, but it went swimmingly nevertheless.

"Speaking strictly of the musicians, not necessarily about the community and the fans, if you're into metal, if you like to play it and write metal music, people do tend to get obsessed with it. Unless you're Metallica or some other stadium band, there's not that much money to be made in metal, so it also attracts people who don't go into music for that reason. Already there, you've ruled out pop," she laughs. "When I was recording in Norway with musicians from there, I was aware they're not very used to recording with women, or to taking orders from women, like 'play this' and 'this is how the riff goes' kind of thing, but they were incredibly nice and easy to work with nevertheless. I was very pleasantly surprised, it was the exact opposite of what I had been warned about. If I was to believe the

urban legend about the gender issues in metal, I wouldn't have done anything. I would say there is much less objectification of women in metal than in pop. Far, far less. Unless you're in a shitty metal band, because then you're just shitty, no matter what, and people will make fun of you for every reason. But in pop people get away with doing pretty bad music by showing skin all the time, and that's just how human nature is, we like looking at naked bodies and that's fine. But in metal it's not applauded to just take off your clothes and then play a bad song. Why should we listen to you?"

**M**yrkur might be a recent name in the extreme metal circles as a performer, but not in music as a whole. Actually, Amalie has been playing music for longer than most of our readers have been alive.

"My upbringing was not very orthodox," she remembers. "My father is a professional musician, he was quite successful in Denmark in the '80s and '90s, so we always had instruments everywhere, he'd teach me some things and I feel there was never really a separation between me and music. If I was not singing, I was playing piano and violin, there was never really a moment when I 'started' playing, because I don't remember ever not playing or not singing. My dad's a guitar player, more into Rolling Stones and The Beatles than metal, but he has all these vintage guitars and just taught me stuff. Half of my time as a child I was in the studio with him, sleeping or playing darts with some band he was recording, that kind of thing. My grandmother was a classical pianist, and when ▶





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she was fourteen she had saved up enough to buy a grand piano that she ended up paying for during a million years, and she gave us that piano, on which I've actually recorded some things for the EP, only heavily distorted and very deep notes. It's a very cool piece from the nineteenth century. So yes, music has always been around me, in me. I often wonder what will happen if I don't want to play music anymore, what will the real world be like for me, because I don't really know what it is. But I think that'll never happen, really." Metal was also an early discovery: "When I was a little girl, my brother had Metallica and Black Sabbath CDs, and I just remember my jaw dropping, having a very strong reaction to it, especially the slower, darker, doomier sounds, but also the thrashier stuff that I found so much fun. It's great when you're a child to feel a little scared of music, and it was scary in a way but also very appealing. Then as a teenager I discovered the black metal sound, which made my jaw drop yet again. How could something be so beautiful and yet so ugly at the same time?"

**M**yrkur's further plunging into extreme metal as she grew older also never clashed with any other principles she might have had, namely of a religious nature, a topic on which she is abundantly clear: "I don't believe in religion. Religion is a mental illness and it's time to realise that it didn't work," she states matter-of-factly. "I don't mind some religions that are more focused on nature worship and on respect for nature and for this earth, but that whole hiding behind religion, pretending to be a mental invalid kind of thing, I can't think for myself so somebody else will and they've made a law so I'll follow it and that other guy who follows another law is my natural enemy... that's just awful. That's an awful way to be a human being. And it also bothers me when church and state are mixed together, whether it's Islam or Christianity, it really rubs me the wrong way."

Also, black metal had other connections for her, that most of us might have missed ourselves...

"Most black metal actually reminded me of playing violin in the symphony orchestra, I found many similarities between classical music and black metal, and the two spoke to me in the same way. They're both very dark, and even technically speaking the bow technique is very similar to the tremolo-picking style riffs, also the minor scales and chord patterns that some composers used... it just spoke to me in many dimensions. Of course, the main thing that's hard for people to get used at first is the vocals, but I got used to them very fast, I thought it was so cool, it was a different way of expressing myself, just going into this place of total darkness, or evil, or sadness. It's also brave to do that, it takes some fucking guts to scream. Not all people can do the


primal scream, it's scary to sound this way, and to hear what you find when you do the roar that animals do, what happens to your pathetic little self-image."

At this point, we ask her point-blank if she considers herself a black metal artist.

"I wouldn't necessarily call myself a black metal artist," she argues. "There's some roots, obviously, and some love of black metal that you can hear in my music, but I don't really follow any of the rules or expectations that come with it. In any aspect, either composition or image or behaviour. I think my music is sort of a hybrid. Even though a lot of people would like to keep metal to themselves and not have more people listen to it, I would be happy if more metal bands would be accepted and respected by larger and more varied crowds. It is an art form and it should be respected at the level of any other music, like classical music or any other genre."

This non-conformity and complete ignorance of the rulebook is exactly what we think makes a true black metal artist. We've said this before, but it bears repeating – black metal needs characters. It needs strong personalities, because it's on those personalities that the genre has been built, and we don't need to roll out the whole list again for anyone to figure that out. And with the notable exception of Erik Danielsson and Watain, the last decade has been painfully short on the sort of people that both concentrate attention, say meaningful things and make the scene move forward and reinvent itself with their genre-transcending music. Myrkur is clearly one of those, and this is only the beginning. We're just now digesting her first full-length, and we can only dream about what will come next. In fact, so can she.

"I've given up on trying to predict how anything will go relating to Myrkur," she says with a dry smile. "Sometimes I feel like, you know when you have a party and you go to sleep but the guests are still in the living room continuing the party? That's how this feels, almost like it's something out of my control that lives a life of its own. I always think that this or that can't happen and that it's impossible – I felt that way about putting the EP together, I felt that way about going to Norway, with strange men recording this whole record based on my shit-sounding demos that turned out more than I could have dreamed of, and then I thought that there's no way I can play this music live and now I'm doing it. I go with it where it leads."

Leading, not following. 

**'M' is released on August 21 on Relapse**  
[www.MyrkurMusic.com](http://www.MyrkurMusic.com)

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# MACHINES OF LOVING GRACE.

ONE MAN IS REDEFINING THE WORD 'HEAVY' AND HIS NAME HIS TRISTAN SHONE. HIS MUSICAL ENDEAVOUR IS CALLED AUTHOR & PUNISHER. IT'S WORTHY OF YOUR ATTENTION

WORDS: JOSÉ CARLOS SANTOS

**Y**ou might have heard of Author & Punisher, which is the work of one man, Tristan Shone, from San Diego, purely on curiosity value alone. A mechanical engineer and sculptor who builds his own noise machines and masks for voice modulation? Come on, is there anything more awesome than that? If he made catchy, vacuous electronic pop music he'd probably be hailed as a genius by the mindless mainstream press and we'd all hate him already. Fortunately, Tristan is a true artist, and as such he has chosen the harder path, in every sense. The music on his four albums so far (five with the new one) is varied, adventurous, but always terrifyingly dark and almost unbearably heavy. For the new 'Melk En Honing' opus, not only has he formed an unlikely alliance with none other than Phil Anselmo for its recording, but he has also turned sort of accessible, so all you newcomers have caught him at the right time. Well, we did say sort of.

"Before I recorded with Phil we toured for some time together, I also played the Housecore festival, I basically got to know him better," Tristan starts, explaining how he got to record with the former Pantera frontman who has shown a remarkably open music taste in these past few years. "I got to realise that his idea of what heavy is is not what a lot of people think, and it's very similar to my idea of what heavy is. When a riff is heavy, it has a real good swing and groove to it, whereas a lot of people these days probably consider heavy to be something like thrash. Like, yeah, these guys are heavy because it sounds like metal and it's fast and they're swinging their hair around... for Phil, I could tell right away that's not what his idea of heavy is like, when he hears something that sounds evil and dark he can tell straight away, and that's exactly how I feel too. It's what made me want to do a record with him. Yeah, he is a great personality, but if we didn't get along in the studio, it could have been a disaster. But it went great, we agreed on most things and that was very helpful.

"I think this album is something of a combination of all the machines I've built in the past, including some synthesizers, some keyboards that I play, because piano is really my main instrument," he describes. "I think it's mainly about me learning how to play these instruments better. Now I can actually hit the pitches a little bit closer, and I think that reflects itself on the lack of noise on this album. It's more about tonality, the message is a little bit clearer. I'm getting better on playing the instruments and that allows me to focus more on my voice, on trying some actual singing and stuff like that."

It could be argued that it's the first Author & Punisher album that's been approached by Tristan from the point of view of a musician, rather than a builder or an engineer trying to extract sounds from something.

"A little bit, yeah, I think so," he agrees. "I have all the instruments set up in a way that I'm comfortable with, and for the first time it does feel like I'm actually playing instruments, rather than playing noise-making machines.

**"**If you listen to the first two albums I did, they're pretty much vocal-based. But I wasn't touring back then, back in 2005 to 2008, so I never really had a chance to work through that," he says, and it makes sense. "Playing the odd show now and then in Southern California is very different from touring

for three or four weeks every night. Now that I'm doing that I think that my voice has become a huge centrepiece of what I'm doing and I want it to cut through. I get really bothered when I hear a band and I can't hear their vocals live really clearly, so I'm focusing on that."

"I have to basically re-tool my whole setup so it can be transportable,"

Tristan says, but without any hint of regret. It's just stuff that needs to be done.

"That was a huge undertaking and it's something that I'm still going through right now. I used to travel alone and that's just not possible anymore, I have to bring a couple of people with me just to help me lift things. I think also one of the reasons I haven't built many machines in the last couple of years is because I'm focusing on getting the live setup dialed in. Maybe before I'd make some machines and fiddle with them, now it's a constant thought - 'you need to be better live' - that's going through my head. People expect more. I think in the past I'd write things and layer them in a way that was impossible to do live, and for me that's frustrating. Now I try to write things that I can actually play with the limited quantity of limbs that I have. My music has to be very physical and limited to what my body can actually accomplish."

There are several videos on A&P's comprehensive website where Tristan explains all the aspects of building and using his machines, and we couldn't help but spot a Gnaw t-shirt being worn in one of them. We can totally see the parallel between the two bands, so we decided to poke around Tristan's music tastes a bit more.

"That t-shirt I actually stole from the record label [Seventh Rule] at the time because they put out a record on it too," he chuckles. "But I do like those guys. The stuff I listen to is frequently less heavy, more electronic, but it has the same sensibility towards rhythm and tone. There's a label in the UK called Modern Love and it's a very kind of dub, slightly industrial label, with people like Demdike Stare, Andy Stott, stuff like that, that don't use any distortion, it's all electronic, but there's something in the way they use tone and in the pacing of the songs that feels so heavy, they're a huge influence on me. And then of course there's the ones that I used to listen to immensely, like Melvins, Neurosis, Godflesh and that sort of bands, that established a core value of heaviness for me."

That's a good core, and a core that seems to be very ingrained in a lot of people these days, much more than just over a decade ago, when Tristan started making his own noise. So, is the world in 2015 more prepared for Author & Punisher than it was in the beginning of the project?

"I'm not sure," he says slowly. "What I know is that this album is much more listenable than the others, so it might appeal to more people because of that. But I don't think I'll ever make anything as listenable as this. I don't think I would do anything that's more poppy or something like that. Honestly, this is as accessible as I'll ever get. I don't try to be that way, but it is a little bit frustrating to see throwback bands blowing up on the cover of metal magazines because they sound like a 1987 thrash band. And there's a lot of bands out there that are trying to do something new, and those should be getting the credit. And they don't."

Well, in some cool magazines like this one, they still do. Especially when they promise years of good noise to come: "I feel like I'll never stop doing this, so I'm in no rush. I feel like I'm just getting started."

Bring it on! 

**'Melk En Honing' is out now on Housecore Records**  
[www.TristanShone.com](http://www.TristanShone.com)



**“I FEEL  
LIKE I’LL  
NEVER  
STOP  
DOING  
THIS”**

# HOW THE GODSKILL

**DEATH METAL BEHEMOTHS NILE ARE BACK WITH AN ALBUM THAT WILL REMIND FANS JUST HOW GOOD THE GENRE CAN BE. KARL SANDERS TALKS ABOUT PROGRESS, SHUNNING THE TECH-METAL APPROACH AND FANS WITH BASEBALL BATS**

*Words: José Carlos Santos*

**W**hile they have remained one of death metal's most reliable powerhouses, the already legendary Nile have seen their mojo wane just a tad in the past few years – their records still crush, but no longer they seem to be received with the kind of momentous fanfare, as a true event, which they were during the first half of the band's career. A lot of that might be due to the progressive dive into technicality and ultra-brutality, at the cost of a more song-oriented feel, and this isn't just wild speculation. It is, in fact, a problem identified and duly addressed by guitarist and main pharaoh (sorry) Karl Sanders.

"The last two records, 'At The Gate Of Sethu' in particular, were really focused on musicianship," he says with absolute honesty. "We got that record so fucking squeaky-clean, because we wanted to hear all the notes. It's something we were doing for ourselves, and I think in a lot of respects that the fans deserve better. It's one thing to make yourself happy, and I think that matters, but I think it was time to do a record for the fans. I think there's a lot of songs on this record that fans will be able to relate to, and that's one of the things we wanted to accomplish with it. We wanted to have a record where all the songs are fun, songs that you want to hear live, it's a very different record from the last one in so many ways. We really wanted to give the fans a Nile record that they could appreciate."

Here's an amusing little anecdote so you see how far Nile's going to please their fans these days. And how hard to please some of their fans are, too.

"There was a guy who kept coming to our shows in Finland, for the last ten years or so," Karl recalls. "Every time we went to Finland, he'd come to the show and come up to me and tell me, 'Karl, please play 'The Howling Of The Jinn'.' Then next

year would come by, it wouldn't be on the setlist again, and he'd do the same thing. About the fourth or fifth time, he said, 'Karl, if next time you don't play 'The Howling Of The Jinn', I'm going to take a baseball bat and break your kneecaps'. Then he smiled and he laughed, because of course he wasn't going to break my kneecaps, but I thought it was a very valid point. There are things the fans really like, and if possible we should play it for them. So last year we added that song to our live set. The guy was very happy, he said thank you, we had a beer together and it was all good."

So, this new album is called 'What Should Not Be Unearthed', and you will surely appreciate it, Nile fan. Keep your baseball bats locked away. We're glad that it was in fact unearthed from the very depths of Karl's songwriting abilities, because it harks back to a pulverising yet memorable Nile, most notably to one of the band's finest hours, the unforgettable 'Annihilation Of The Wicked' album. Karl agrees.

"Sure, there are parallels," he admits. "That was another reactionary album. When I look back ▶



# L



"I THINK FOR THE LAST HUNDRED YEARS OR SO, OUR  
WORLD VIEW, OUR MINDSET AND OUR PSYCHOLOGY  
AS A SPECIES HAS BEEN SO RADICALLY ALTERED THAT  
THERE'S NO GOING BACK"

on it now, I remember what I was feeling back then. Part of me was angry because some critics were saying we were a gimmick band, that we weren't even real death metal, that we couldn't even play our instruments, all we had was this gimmick about Egyptology. That really made me mad. 'Annihilation Of The Wicked' was just about crushing any naysayers who doubted our brutality. But still, I look back to all these records and I see this path of reactionism, and I think it's time to put a stop to it, not let the band be swayed by the stuff we read on the internet about us. That stuff is fucking worthless and it's caused so much pain in our lives and in our music that we need to stop that."

Because, as it turns out, the direction the band took on 'Those Whom The Gods Detest'


and '...Sethu' in particular, was also partially caused by paying to much attention to what people are saying.

"I had a few epiphanies that kind of pointed me in this direction," Karl ponders. "They were simple ones – the first one was based on the fact that a lot of times people were bashing on Nile records, saying they were muddy, that they couldn't tell where the guitar was going, this was mostly coming from guitar players, people who were writing tablatures on the internet and getting the guitar parts wrong. And then, when '...Sethu' came out, all the tabs that people made and put on the internet were still wrong! I thought to myself, wait a second. So I just killed myself for the best part of a year to make a record that's so clean that you can hear every note, and these people still get it wrong!

So you know what? It doesn't fucking matter. That's not what's important. And then I got a letter from a fan, and he said something that was so simple and so pure that it really touched my heart. He said, 'Karl, there is a lot of great guitar playing on this album, but please, for the next album, can we have the old guitar sound back?'. And I went, you know, I get it. I understand that, and I thought we should make a record that illustrates what we're really about." No regrets, though. "It is a path that we had to take. It was an important stepping stone to cleanse our soul, to heal all the wounds that kind of led to the point that we got to. I don't think we could have made this record, had we not made the last one."



"I HAD A FEW EPIPHANIES THAT  
KIND OF POINTED ME IN THIS  
DIRECTION"



**S**o, ladies and gentlemen, behold the new Nile. Cower as the crushing power of opener 'Call To Destruction' washes over you, rejoice as the riffage of 'Evil To Cast Out Evil' takes root in your brain forever, and be petrified as 'In The Name Of Amun' knocks you off your feet. Not only are these some of the instant highlights, they are also the songs Karl has hand-picked to be cast straight into the band's live setlist, so expect them to haunt you for a long time from now on. They symbolise the breaking of shackles from a band determined to recover their death metal throne, and they couldn't be more exhilarating.

"That's a nice way to think of it," Karl chuckles. "Yeah, let's hope so, that we've been able to throw out these shackles and that we never let them be put on our band again. Because this took a whole new approach to things. I decided we were going to be anti-technical death metal," he says,

an idea he had already put down on the short preview interview we ran on our last issue. "A lot of people call us tech-death, but when I hear tech-death nowadays, there's lots of amazing playing in those records, but sometimes it gets hard to hear a fucking song. So I said to myself I'm just going to write songs and not give a fuck if it's going to be technical or not. Of course I'm still a guitar player and I still want to play cool guitar parts, but everything I'm playing on this album is from the angle of wanting to write a cool metal song, and fuck any other considerations."

Even the subject matter, always an important topic of discussion with Nile, while obviously not escaping the ever-present Egyptology context, does deviate a bit from the norm. The starting point is indeed in Egypt, but the over-arching concept is a much more universal one, with the Egypt part being used, essentially, as a metaphor to broader things. On the press release, Karl mentions that the basis for the album is "the idea that what if archaeologists accidentally dug up something, so old and unimaginable in its implications of the origin of humanity that it rocked the foundations of modern civilization," an idea based on the many recent excavations in Egypt which have yielded fantastic discoveries.

At one point, however, Karl realised this has already happened albeit not in such a literary way – just compare how much science has advanced in the last 200 years, for instance, compare what we know about our species and the world to what our nineteenth century ancestors knew.

"I didn't set out on that path, but it's where it went," Karl says of the album's subject matter. "What if... what if they dug up some shit that's so horrible that it would fuck up people's minds? I remember the comic books I read when I was a kid, like what if Spider-Man and Superman fell into a pit of nuclear acid, or whatever? What if? I think for the last hundred years or so, our world view, our mindset and our psychology as a species has been so radically altered that there's no going back. Religion, especially, in terms of our origin as a species and where we've been, has been denied, because we haven't always been the 'masters' of this world. That's pure Lovecraft! In its most

distilled essence. Mankind was not the first race to occupy this earth."

This instinctively begs the ever-present question of whether the Egyptology subject that's inextricably linked to the band's own existence is somehow becoming a limitation, or a constraint, but you know what? That's a bit of a stupid question anyway. If blood and guts, talked about by several million death metal bands, aren't a constraint, why should anything else be? Karl is a champ though, and he indulges us.

"I don't feel necessarily constricted, at least not in a negative way. In recent years, I've seen other bands popping up using death metal and Egyptology as their theme, and I thought it was time to put a little more thought into broadening that aspect of what we're doing, because there's so many people now doing what we used to do. I'm not going to name any names because some of those guys are my friends, and I like them," he chuckles. "They got good bands and I enjoy them, so I'm not saying anything negative. But it was indeed time to broaden our horizons and take the band to places where not necessarily everyone else can follow. That's an evolutionary process, very similar to the musical one. I often wonder..." he pauses, reaching basically the same conclusion we just did before asking the fateful question. "Take for example the guys in Suffocation or the guys in Cannibal Corpse, there are so many bands that have plagiarised their work over the years, literally hundreds. Hundreds of bands have copied Cannibal Corpse and Suffocation. So how does that make those guys feel and how much harder does it make for them to do what they do?"

A welcome distraction from Nile (although not from the Egypt theme) Karl used to have were his solo albums, but not since 2009's 'Saurian Exorcisms' have we heard anything about this more experimental, mystical side of his songwriting skills. That might be about to change, however.

"I really should get going on it this summer," he offers, almost more as a reminder to himself than actually a reply to a question. "A lot of people have been asking me about it, and it is something I want to do, I've even got a lot of ideas for it, but I've just been really busy with Nile. But it's a good busy. Nile is the band I gave my life to, so it's okay. Dallas, George and I often talk about the future of the band in our meetings, we very much want to press forward with Nile, both now and for the future. We're not a band that is content to rest on things we did ten or twenty years ago. There have been people asking us why we don't do an album like 'In Their Darkened Shrines', for instance, or do some stuff like this or that record. While I appreciate that, and while I can see what they're saying, I really want to press forward. The new record, while you may be able to draw some similarities to something like 'Annihilation Of The Wicked' as we've talked about, it's definitely not like that album. It's a completely different thing, it's moving forward."

Moving forward like the unstoppable force they are.

'What Should Not Be Unearthed' is out on August 28th on Nuclear Blast  
[www.Nile-Catacombs.com](http://www.Nile-Catacombs.com)



TO SAY THE LAST FEW YEARS HAVE BEEN ROUGH FOR LAMB OF GOD FRONTMAN RANDY BLYTHE WOULD BE AN UNDERSTATEMENT; WITH MANSLAUGHTER CHARGES, PRISON SENTENCES AND INTERNAL CONFLICT WITHIN THE BAND ITSELF, IT'S A WONDER THEIR NEW ALBUM 'VII: STURM UND DRANG' EXISTS IN THE FIRST PLACE. **TERRORIZER FINDS OUT HOW IT HAPPENED...**

WORDS: LEE MACBRIDE PARKER

The last time the outspoken David Randall Blythe graced our cover, he candidly mused, "I thought I'd be dead by now!". He was jubilant at the release of his band Lamb Of God's then sixth album, 'Resolution' and ever more so at his soulful connection with new found sobriety and married life at age 40, all the while reflecting on two decades fronting the Virginian quintet. Three years on and the tribulations Randy – as he's known by fans and music press alike – has stared down the barrel of are nothing short of extraordinary, and somewhat lends that earlier statement a certain self-prophesising weight to it in reflection.

Six months after our revealing and in part philosophical interview which took place in December 2011, Randy's life took a dramatic and extremely uncertain turn when he found himself arrested, charged and remanded in custody by the authorities of the Czech Republic for manslaughter charges in connection with an incident then accused as causing the tragic death of nineteen-year-old fan, Daniel Nosek, two years previously at one of the band's shows. Since being acquitted by the Prague High Court one year later and subsequent appeal courts, Randy spent one year writing a book, titled 'Dark Days', which he has promised will be a revealing account of the events that took place over that period and describes it as,

"a pretty compelling read."

"The book is basically a recounting of the experience that happened, starting with my arrest and ending with my exoneration" he explains. "People reading the book shouldn't expect a legal thriller, I'm not John Grisham. I find [court room dramas] extremely dry, the court room experience is dry as it is, I wouldn't want to write about it. There's some funny shit in there too. There's some real humour in there and that's a good sign because, if I laugh out loud, I'm confident someone else will laugh out loud but, just sitting in that whole experience for a year writing it was emotionally draining. That's the only way I survived being incarcerated, a finely honed sense of the absurd. In fact the majority of the book takes place in prison because people say, 'Oh my god, what was that like?', 'What's a Czech prison like,' and I can respond, 'well, I wrote a 500-page book about it,'" he chuckles.

"The story of my arrest and exoneration is merely a framework," he continues. "It's a vehicle to make the point of personal accountability which is something I believe is sorely lacking in today's world so that's what the book is really about, that's its root, personal accountability and trying to do the right thing even when it's scary. I didn't enjoy the subject matter, it sucked. In a way the structure of the book was already in place, so that made it easier but in other ways it made it really restrictive because I tried, like other non-fiction authors, to make it 100-per-cent truthful to the best of my ability and not embellish things and not detract from what it was about."

The vocalist continues to then transparently describe his stay at a Czech prison.

"I wasn't locked up alone any more than any other prisoner. When you're locked up in their prison you spend two weeks or a month, on average, locked up in the basement and they let you out for an hour to mix you in with the other prisoners and then you mix with the general population but, everyone that goes there has to go in for observation for depression, so they put you in the darkest, dankest place in the whole prison, it's like, 'OK let's see if he's depressed, let's stick him in the most depressing place in the whole prison.'"

Randy, who has always been open about his

chequered past and struggling youth, goes on to agree about the intensity of such an event and how keeping a journal provided him with some respite and focus. "It's a pretty intense story, it gives a snapshot of how I was feeling during the whole thing because I kept a pretty extensive journal. I've lived a sketchy life at times and it wasn't my first time being locked up overnight, I used to drink a ton so, I know what going to jail is, I just didn't know what going to prison was. I think a lot of things I went through in my life, I mean, I don't come from some rich and privileged background, I used to live in a punk house called Dirtbag Manor. Once you've lived in a place called Dirtbag Manor, you're a little better prepared to being incarcerated, I think, then maybe someone who hasn't really experienced any hardship or whatever."

Talking to Randy about his turn to picking up the pen, it transpires that this a long desired dream for the now 44-year-old.

"I've been reading books since I was a child and I know what good writing is," he asserts. "[Being an author] is awesome. It's been my dream since being a kid, it's far more important to me than being a musician. I wrote about four chapters while I was on tour and that was a big struggle because I found, for me, fuelled probably by my Wayne Hemingway fantasies from the 1920s, writing in cafes in Paris, I had this dream that I would be able to write on tour, come off stage and go to the coffee shop and write but that's not what happened. I've been dreaming of this since I was in fourth grade," he exclaims. "I will be writing books until I'm 70, I sure as hell won't be in Lamb Of God when I'm 70. You won't see me all shriveled up, croaking on stage at Download Festival, no, get the fuck out of here. My involvement in this band has a shelf life."

A shelf life Lamb Of God may have but, for the time being, the band have just released their seventh full-length, 'VII: Sturm Und Drang' via their new European home, Nuclear Blast alongside other heavyweights Machine Head and Behemoth.

For the frontman, 'VII: Sturm Und Drang' (roughly translated from German as storm and stress) was all about going back to basics to capture ▶

**"I DIDN'T WRITE SOME SORT OF PRISON-INSPIRED RECORD BECAUSE I'M NOT A FREAKING GANGSTER RAPPER"**





## "EVERY ALBUM COULD BE THE LAST FOR THESE ROAMING BUNCH OF ASS CLOWNS – IT'S A RIDICULOUS, LUDICROUS BAND"

the rawness and cohesive sound of their earlier releases – but first he wants to make something very clear.

"The album deals more with other people than me in any way, shape or form, there's only two songs that came out of that [prison] experience," Randy stresses. "I wrote them three years ago when I was still locked up, and those are the two songs that have already been released, 'Still Echoes' and '512' so, I didn't write some sort of prison-inspired record, I think that would be disingenuous, because I'm not a freaking gangster rapper and I figured it would be disrespectful to the whole situation – someone lost their life – but thematically the album deals with how people react in extreme situations, under stress. It really had nothing to do with me other than two songs that were written during a stormy and stressful time so it's more about other people. I think a huge reason for the way the record is, the way it sounds and that it's cohesive, I think, is due to our producer encouraging our guitar players Mark [Morton] and Willie [Adler], who write the music, to be a band, shockingly," he quips dryly before adding, "and record together as a band like we did in the old days, get in a room together, write together and hash it out as opposed to being at home with a computer demoing individual songs to their heart's content and bringing them in and trying to teach everyone else the songs.

"I felt the band was getting a bit schizophrenic," Randy goes on. "Technology has made it so easy for everyone to sit at home with a laptop and, I mean, it's not going to sound like a


Led Zeppelin record but, to make a decent record completely by yourself, you can do it yourself with a MacBook Pro and a few interfaces and all. That's great for documentation and solo projects, I think, but I think the communal aspect for bands, at least for my band, was suffering, because for the last few records, Mark would bring in his songs and Willie would bring his songs and then we'd pick and choose and argue over the songs and that would be it, it would be a collection of songs. But for this record, the producer said, 'I want you guys to bring in an idea but not a fully fleshed out creation,' and lo and behold it turned out pretty good, I think. It's not a new way of doing things, it's a return to an old way, to what works best. Back in the day when we wanted to record something or demo something, it's not like everybody had a laptop at home, it was like let's go to a practice space and record on a shitty boom box. It's a communal writing process for the band and I think it's been a while since that happened."

**S**urely for a band that has been through a number of well-documented scuffles with each other, being in the same room took its toll?

"The more we are around each other, the closer we are to breaking up," Randy smiles. "I was doing an interview in Switzerland and I've stopped smoking on tour, I now smoke e-cigarettes and [the interviewer] said, 'You've quit drinking, you've quit drugs and you've quit cigarettes, what will you quit next?' and Mark says, 'Lamb Of God,'" Randy laughs before continuing. "Every album could be the last for these roaming bunch of ass clowns, it's

a ridiculous, ludicrous band but I think we're all too stubborn to quit. None of us want to be the guy that throws in the towel, so we keep limping along, battering on together over the years."

Now reflecting on our earlier point about Randy's arguably cynical view of the world and his own survival and peaceful place within it, but how he continues to find solace in his creative endeavours (even if they have landed him in uncharted negative territory at times) and his growth as a human being, a husband as well as band mate, Randy is quick to debate the extent he's been shaped, if at all.

"I'm a little older, a little wiser and I surf better. I'm 44, I guess 50 is the next big milestone, they say 50 is the new 30 so I'm still in my twenties, living like it at least," he laughs. "I'm reliving my twenties right now but in a much better way because I don't really remember my twenties, it was a rough decade. I'm still sober, they say with age comes a little more wisdom, well that's debatable for me, I guess I'm trying to learn from other people's mistakes before I have to learn from my own. I'm trying to model myself after Nick Cave, get more dignified as I get older, stop the craziness, start wearing some nice snakeskin boots, grow a moustache and do moody soundtracks and art books. Every day, and it's going to sound cheesy, but every day that I wake up, and I'm breathing and walking on my own two feet, I'm grateful." 

**'VII. Sturm Und Drang' is out now on Nuclear Blast**  
[www.Lamb-Of-God.com](http://www.Lamb-Of-God.com)

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WITH HER DOOM-LADEN  
NEW ALBUM 'ABYSS' BEING  
HER HEAVIEST MATERIAL  
YET, WE THOUGHT IT  
WAS HIGH TIME THAT  
TERRORIZER CAUGHT  
UP WITH THE ENIGMATIC  
CHELSEA WOLFE

Words: Joy Shannon

# THE ABYSS STARES BACK

**F**or me, this album has a feeling of the state of mind between sleeping and waking," says Chelsea Wolfe on her newest album 'Abyss'. Sleep paralysis and the writings of Carl Jung, especially his description of "dropping" into his subconscious, influenced this album's thematic concept and specific songs like 'After The Fall'. Wolfe elaborates that the album's concept revealed itself to her when she realized that "most of the songs on the album are about going deep into something."

The dynamics of the album feel like they teeter back and forth between falling deep into what Wolfe calls "immeasurable space, primal chaos, (and) the abyss of time," described by heavy distorted sounds and some sort of pensive and pulsing pause with hushed, lulling tones. Wolfe explains that this thematic exploration was "kind of sensual and intimate in a way," like delving into "the abyss inside yourself."

This album found Wolfe writing with longtime collaborator and multi-instrumentalist Ben Chisholm along with drummer Dylan Fujioka, violist Ezra Buchla and guitarist Mike Sullivan from Russian Circles. While Wolfe and Chisholm produced their previous and widely-acclaimed effort 'Pain Is Beauty', for 'Abyss' they chose to enlist producer John Congleton, known for his work with Swans and St. Vincent.

"We have everything worked out in the demos before we get into the studio, but this time there was a new outside force, a new space, and that's how it

became different," says Wolfe on how recording with Congleton in Dallas, Texas changed the recording process for the band. "John and I had different ways of approaching this album but we met in the middle, so I think it was a good thing for us to make this record together."


While 2013's 'Pain Is Beauty' included electronic elements, 'Abyss' finds the band delving into heavier doom-laden distortion. "I left certain things more raw and open than I usually would," says Chelsea. "There were little moments on the album that made me feel uncomfortable but I left them as they were because I wanted it to have vulnerability, as well as power." Wolfe often blends conceptual extremes in her music and this album sonically pits opposites like power and vulnerability, and tension and release right up against each other.

The richness of the layers within Wolfe's music consistently lends itself to collaborations in the visual arts, whether it's working with stylist and costume designer Jenni Hensler to create the costumes she wears or to create the mesmerizing 2014 short film 'Lone' with filmmaker Mark Pellington. For the cover art for 'Abyss', Wolfe worked with the renowned painter Henrik Uldalen, whose work often depicts the human form emerging from darkness or as if entirely made of smoke in hushed palettes and painterly brushstrokes. Of this collaboration, Wolfe remarks, "When I was thinking about the artwork for this

album, his paintings came to mind and felt like such a perfect fit. His work is so wonderful."

Chelsea is planning on keeping busy after the release of 'Abyss' too. "We'll tour North America in August [and] September with Wovenhand. Then [we are] heading over to Europe/UK again," she says. "I am part of a side project that is really interesting but I can't talk about it yet. Just finished recording for it though."

Meanwhile, Wolfe just released a music video for the song 'Carion Flowers' which she directed herself with collaborator Ben Chisholm. The video captures the haunting vulnerability and brutality of the song, in stark black and white, filmed in New York state and the drought-stricken hills of Southern California.

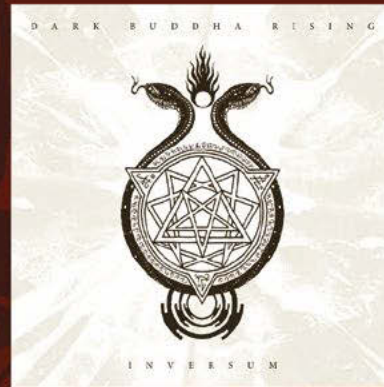
"The visuals in the video allude to the drought in California and frustration about corporations being allowed to pump out all the water, destroying environments and communities, just to sell it back," she elaborates. "While writing 'Abyss', I lived near where the water is piped into Los Angeles, but the lakes were dried up and the mountains were burned from fires... There is anger in this song; it's got a sense of revenge for anyone who has suffered or died because of injustice." 

'Abyss' is due to be released on August 7th via Sargent House  
[www.ChelseaWolfe.net](http://www.ChelseaWolfe.net)

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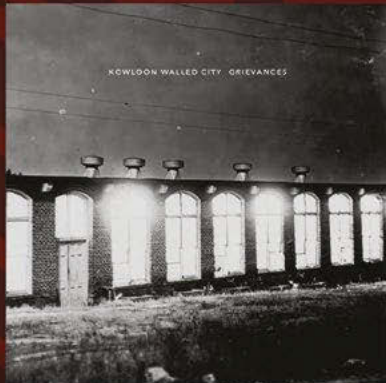
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"BEING UNDERDOGS MEANS  
SOMETHING TO

# Enhanced

**MAURIZIO IACONO FROM CANADA'S KATAKLYSM IS IN A REFLECTIVE MOOD AS HE TALKS NOT ONLY ABOUT ARGUABLY THEIR BEST RECORD TO DATE BUT ALSO ON HOW HE'S SURVIVED MORE THAN A QUARTER OF A CENTURY IN THE EXTREME METAL QUAGMIRE**

**Words: José Carlos Santos**

**Q**uickly, name a death metal band that has put out twelve full-length albums already and is still going strong. Unless you're counting those crazy gore-obsessed death/grind bands that have put out five albums since we started this sentence, it's not easy, is it? Especially since we're not talking about a genre pioneering bunch of 60 year olds or anything here – Kataklysm aren't even 25 years old as a band yet (that'll happen next year), and yet their work rate has been impeccable and tireless, which is even more the cause of admiration as there has never really been a slump, a decrease in form or anything. There ain't a stinker among the twelve, and new beast 'Of Ghosts And Gods' is actually one of the best yet.

"When we started, we were the only Canadian band signed to Nuclear Blast," vocalist Maurizio Iacono harks back, after we successfully manage to get him into a nostalgic mood. "Cryptopsy wasn't doing much, Gorguts had been dropped by Roadrunner... it was an in-between situation in the '90s, I remember

our distributor telling us at the time to enjoy it, because in that scene, bands lasted about two records. It was very discouraging, but at the same time I don't like it when people put limits on me. I decided I wanted to do it as far as I could take it. But it wasn't in my mind that I'd still be here twenty-something years later. I'm very fortunate to have this career and for Kataklysm to be what I think is an important name, especially in the Canadian scene, I'm very happy about it."

So, a stubborn refusal to let others tell you what you can't do is a good start to reach longevity in a band. Makes sense, and deserves praise. Any more secrets?

"I think that being the underdogs in this industry has been important in lasting as much as we have so far," Maurizio reasons. "Because we were never part of that elite death metal big four, or five, or six, or whoever they are. We weren't part of a 'scene', we weren't from Sweden, or from Florida, we were just

Kataklysm. And being underdogs meant we've always had something to fight for, it's always given us an edge, allowed us to navigate smoothly and gradually, instead of being like all the other bands that reached the top quickly and then had to maintain it with great difficulty. I think we've had a great evolution throughout all our records. There's three major steps along the way that I can identify for us – there was 'Temple Of Knowledge (Kataklysm Part III)' in 1996, it was a record that opened a lot of eyes because it was so extreme and crazy for that timeframe, there was nobody doing that stuff that we were doing. Then I'd say it was 'Shadows & Dust' from 2002, there's not one place where we play where people don't know the 'Shadows & Dust' song, everybody knows that song. And then the next huge step was 'In The Arms Of Devastation' in 2006, that's where things really exploded for us, it was our biggest selling record."

So, on to 2015, and 'Of Ghosts And Gods' is upon us. It's not wildly different from 2013's 'Waiting For The End To Come', but then again, that's just not how Kataklysm roll.

"I think that, when you're in a band like ours, and especially in a tough scene like death metal where everybody is very judgemental, where it's very hard to do something a little different without being criticised, the most important thing is to stay relevant while at the same time not betraying who you are," Maurizio



NT WE'VE ALWAYS HAD  
FIGHT FOR"

# By The Lore

says wisely. "Over the years we've been smart in how we've done our business, and in how we've never really conformed to anything. We've just been Kataklysm. When the main bands were the really super-technical or ultra-brutal bands, we've never gone down that path, we stayed melodic how we've always been, doing what we do. Consistency is the key word. And like a good wine, I think we're getting better with age."

But surely repetition is a concern?

"It's easy to repeat yourself," he admits readily. "If you're comfortable with what you do, you just keep doing it, and especially if you're popular that's the easiest way to maintain that. As for Kataklysm, it gets more difficult in the sense of trying to do something outside the box each time. We have a very solid and very dedicated fanbase that likes Kataklysm for what we are, but we also feel that we have to continue to evolve around that foundation. So we do it tastefully, we don't completely switch everything from an album to the next. We did a major switch once, when we came back after taking a break, after 'Temple Of Knowledge...', we had a major direction change at that point, and since then we haven't had a major overhaul, but at each step the music is more mature, especially with the last two records, I think they show a different level of musicianship for Kataklysm. Particularly the new one."

Why is the new one awesome, then?

"Getting Andy Sneap on board for the production

and the mix was a big point in getting our music across the right way as far as sound goes," he starts, before getting right into the thick of it. "But it's tough for us. It's our twelfth record, and at twelve records you almost have to think like Slayer – do you really want to take a huge gamble on your career at this point? There's no point in changing something that's not broken, but we have to keep challenging ourselves, and this album is a perfect balance of that. We're pushing the envelope, there's songs on this album that reach 270 beats per minute, that's lightning speed. And then there's songs that are more mellow, with ambiance and different aspects. I think we're one of the rare bands that can mix the two things and still make it work. If we go completely off the deep end with Kataklysm, we'll do it as a song. I think 'The World Is A Dying Insect', the last song on the new album, is a perfect example of that. It's got stuff that we've never tried before, it's a song that's really out there."

If they want to go off the deep end for a whole album, they'll probably just do another band. As they have, remember? "Ex Deo for me... a lot of people at the time asked me why didn't I just do that in Kataklysm and use the whole Roman imagery in Kataklysm, well, I didn't because it doesn't fit, it's not Kataklysm," the vocalist argues with unwavering simplicity. "Kataklysm has become a band about songs,

we write songs that people remember, that can stand the test of time. Ex Deo was more of a project defying everything, all the stuff that we're used to, it's another beast entirely and it wasn't just because of the themes. It's symphonic, some songs last over eight minutes, it doesn't have blastbeats, it's another world entirely, and it gave us the opportunity to do things that we couldn't try within Kataklysm, and that was very important."

With the album's subject matter being one more thought-provoking analysis on society that'll give the band's dedicated fans a lot to chew on and discuss on forums across the internet, 'Of Ghosts And Gods' is what it is – another very strong Kataklysm album, based on reality.

"A lot of our fans are very dedicated to our lyrics, they sing along to the songs because they feel the message behind them affects them as well, we talk about things that we're feeling, we're people just like them. We let Deicide do the blood and the satanic death metal stuff, and Cannibal Corpse talk about killing babies, we're not good at that," Maurizio laughs.

Well, they're good at many other things, so that's okay. ☺

'Of Ghosts And Gods' is out now on Nuclear Blast  
[www.Facebook.com/Kataklysm](http://www.Facebook.com/Kataklysm)

# THE OUTSIDERS

**MAKE NEVER QUITE GAINED THE RECOGNITION THEY DESERVED ON THEIR FIRST TIME AROUND, BUT WITH ALBUM TWO, 'THE GOLDEN VEIL', THEY'RE SET TO LEAVE JAWS ON THE FLOOR...**

**Words: Rob Snyce**

**R**eturning from a lengthy slumber – where life, and the necessity of paying the damn rent, intervened – North Carolina's MAKE unveil a genuine candidate for album of the year. Bold, expansive and artfully wrought, 'The Golden Veil' calls to mind the suffocating grooves of Ufomammut and shifting sonic landscapes of (the original, less murder-y) Isis, without directly aping either. It sounds like a record that's been agonised over, and as vocalist/bassist Spencer Lee reflects, the trio haven't been short of time to realise their vision.

"We've been playing together for six years now," he notes, "and over time, have solidified a collective identity. Some of these songs came from abstract, long-form jams, almost like a stream of consciousness; and then we'd gradually refine them, experimenting with overdubs, and developing a lyrical concept. We feel somewhat cut off from the world in our practice space, so there's no real consideration of what anyone else is doing, or how we'll be perceived. It's taken a lot of juggling schedules, but going through every facet of making a record – even down to pressing and releasing

the LPs ourselves – has been hugely enjoyable. Empowering, even."

Picking up where 2012's phenomenally ambitious 'Axis' left off, they've created something that, while far from an easy listen, rewards complete immersion. What's more, they're exploring some intriguing conceptual terrain – inspired by, among other things, internet clickbait.

"As individuals, we're often on a very similar wavelength," notes Spencer. "The idea of 'The Golden Veil' partially came from a photo we found of a fistfight in the Ukrainian Parliament, doing the rounds online. The composition of these pictures fit exactly with the 'golden spiral', which has been utilized a lot in art, and occurs often in nature. It got us thinking about how people – often religious people – try to fit reality into preconceived patterns, rather than observing patterns that are actually out there in the world. It's like a veil that clouds our vision, and we've played around a lot with that idea."

Eerie and slow-burning, 'The Absurdist' is one of the most striking indications of MAKE's expanding

range. Yet it also teases out themes that have been with them from day one, such as the writings of Algerian-French philosopher Albert Camus.

"The Myth Of Sisyphus' and absurdism have always interested us as a band," nods the frontman, "and they reflect the way we tend to perceive life. Our older song 'Sisyphus' was based upon Camus's writings on the myth of Sisyphus – the idea that when you realise there's no inherent meaning to life, you can either embrace that absurdity or essentially just end yourself. We've found ourselves at places where we've been faced with that question, and the response has always been 'hey, bring it on!' The song 'The Absurdist' has a very similar message. We feel that our lives don't have any meaning that we don't ascribe to them, so we want to make them as incredible as possible, for our own sakes."

Sadly, it's doubtful whether we'll be seeing the trio on our shores anytime soon. While the DIY route has proven liberating, neither it, nor their burgeoning day jobs, make touring all that viable.

"We don't have any plans to tour right now, though it's not something we're opposed to," he concludes. "I'm a barista, but our new drummer Luke [Herbst], who's been killing it for us, is married with two kids, and Scott [Endres, guitar/vocals] works with a company producing and exporting art. There are a lot of things we don't want to give up, and that's the biggest hurdle. Maybe we can sort out the odd show, here and there."

Fingers crossed, that's more than just a pipe-dream. ☹️

'The Golden Dream' is out now  
[www.Facebook.com/TheBandMake](http://www.Facebook.com/TheBandMake)

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## BLACK BOOK LODGE

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The praised Danish progressive rock-band return with their second album!

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Sweden Rock Magazine (SE) – 7 out of 10  
Aardschok (NL) – 88 out of 100  
Rock Hard (DE) – 8 out of 10  
Metalized (DK) – 8 out of 10

## TOMB OF FINLAND

Below the green

The debut album from the dark, doomy and death metal band Tomb Of Finland.

Featuring ex-members of Charon, Wolfheart, and ...And Oceans.

For fans of Sentenced, Charon, Saturnus and Edge Of Sanity

Legacy (DE) – 12 out of 15

## NO RETURN

Fearless Walk To Rise

The French metal-monster NO RETURN is back with a killer new album!

For fans of Arch Enemy, Testament and At The Gates

Legacy (DE) – 13 out of 15  
Deaf Forever (DE) – 8 out of 10  
Hard Rock (FR) – 8,5 out of 10  
Rock Hard (DE) – 7,5 out of 10

## EVIL

Shoot The Messenger

The legendary cult-phenomenon EVIL has returned with its first album since 'Evils Message' from 1984

For fans of Judas Priest, Scorpions, Savatage and of course Evil!

Rock Tribune (BE) – 8 out of 10  
Metalized (DK) – 8 out of 10  
Aardschok (NL) – 72 out of 100  
Rock It – (DE) 7 out of 10

## EGONAUT

Deluminati

Third album from the Swedish dark bastard-rockers!

For fans of Black Sabbath, Deep Purple, Spiritual Beggars, In Solitude

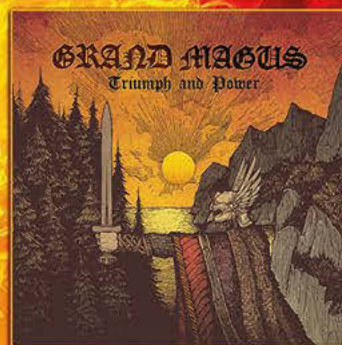
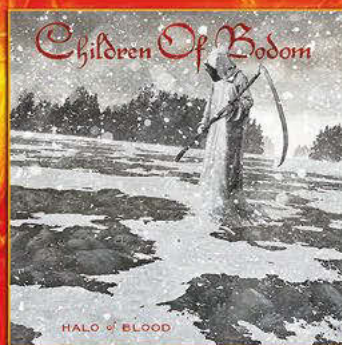
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# MILBOG SPELLT

THE EXPANSIVE FAMILY TREE OF ITALIAN PROG MAVERICKS GOBLIN IS ABOUT TO GET EVEN MORE CONFUSING AS NEW INCARNATION GOBLIN REBIRTH GEAR UP TO RELEASE THEIR DEBUT ALBUM. TERRORIZER SEEKS TO UNRAVEL AND REVEL IN THAT CONFUSION IN EQUAL MEASURE...

Words: Kevin Stewart-Panko

**T**here is a storyline that connects all the music together. It is the story of an imaginary, dwarf-like creature called 'X'. The cover art applies perfectly as it is full of symbols related to the story in some way. There are some different ways to interpret the story. One could consider the title and content as a vague metaphor referring to the actual history of Goblin. But perhaps we should leave it to your imagination!"

The speaker in the above instance is Aidan Zammit, one half of the keyboard duo driving Goblin Rebirth, the latest entry into the long and confusing history of cinematic prog-rock auteurs, Goblin. Beginning in the early '70s under the moniker Cherry Five, the band issued one self-titled album after which they were approached to work

on the soundtrack for the film 'Profondo Rosso'. It was then they changed their name to Goblin and things took off, in terms of a redirection towards soundtrack commissions and number of albums issued, as well as the lack of linearity that plagues their history to this day.

We're going to assume that, at the very least, you're familiar with the work the band did on George Romero's 'Dawn Of The Dead'. What we're not going to assume is that, like us, any of you have been able to follow the labyrinthine family tree of band members and various off-shoots that have, at our best and last count, resulted in three, maybe four, Goblin-related bands existing at present (if you are interested in decoding this mess, check out Fabio Capuzzo's exhaustive tome 'Goblin sette note

in rosso'). This includes our focus, Goblin Rebirth which features original players Fabio Pignatelli and Agostino Marangolo. This particular permutation of the band has been around for a few years and are now about to issue their self-titled debut full-length.

"This band started in 2011 after the split following an album and tour called 'Back To The Goblin'," explains guitarist Giacomo Anselmi. "Agostino Marangolo, Fabio Pignatelli and Aidan Zammit came from that formation. Danilo Cherni and I joined up with them to make Goblin Rebirth which was originally born to give importance to soundtracks never played live by Goblin such as 'La Chiesa', 'Buio Omega', and 'Contamination' and to create new material."

"Giacomo is one of the most complete musicians and technically proficient guitarists I have ever met in life," exclaims Aidan, as he introduces the members of Goblin Rebirth to Terrorizer. "His wonderful talent as a performer and writer are essential to the sound of Goblin Rebirth. He is an experienced session player with a broad range of styles and is a highly respected teacher in Rome. I could say much the same for Danilo Cherni, my

"MUSIC IS SIMPLY THE BEST ART FOR US TO TRANSMIT"



# BACKWARDS

companion on keys. Danilo is a highly creative explorer of sounds and has a cave full of vintage keys and synths. And both are calm, nice people to be with, which helps! I have known and performed with my friends Agostino and Fabio for years now. We've all been part of the scene in Rome for a long time and our paths have crossed on many sessions and gigs. I joined up with them in the 'Back To The Goblin' tour in 2009 and that was how I was dragged into the Goblin vortex!"

**G**oblin Rebirth' itself isn't an actual soundtrack dedicated to any particular filmic piece of work, despite telling the story of the 'X' character and being an almost completely instrumental balance along a tightrope between polished '70s prog and more cinematic flair. In a way, the band lives up to its self-description as 'MovieProg' despite the fact that 'Goblin Rebirth' presents as a more traditional album set for release on Relapse, instead of the usual labels that were sniffing around when news broke the band was ready to make permanent some of the material they had been working on.


"I've always been a concept album fan and this collection of compositions just seemed to fall into place," says Aidan. "I would say that it's roughly a concept album, not thoroughly – there is some thematic development as the album progresses, and there are some common elements that reappear during the course of the album, but the tracks can all stand out individually."

"Relapse came into the picture largely thanks to our friend Steve Moore of Zombi," he continues. "The guys from the label came to see a Goblin performance in Philly in December 2013, which featured three Rebirth members, and apparently they were blown away! We then began sending them the material we had been working on and that really got the ball rolling. We did have some interest from other labels, but Relapse seemed to be the right choice. They have a competent and friendly team, always positive and enthusiastic."

And on the topic of long-lasting, the members of Goblin Rebirth, regardless of what version of Goblin this is and what armchair quarterbacks have to say about which version is the 'real' Goblin, have all been playing music for a long, long time. With

that comes the reality that the meaning of what they do and the place music has in their lives has changed over time and will change as the future becomes the now.

"Music is simply the best art for us to transmit our emotions and it always will be that way," explains Giacomo. "As it was in the past. The best hope for the future comes with great roots in the past. Some of us are Goblin, and some of us grew up loving and playing Goblin music. With Goblin Rebirth, the music lives on and progresses."

"Goblin Rebirth continues the journey that started with Goblin in the 1970s," concludes Aidan. "We are getting older, but mostly looking forward to making new music, without being stuck in the past. Three members of this band were still kids when 'Deep Red' and 'Suspiria' were at their peak. So, it's inevitable that we will be looking more to the future than to the past, but always respecting the experience and the traditions of the original Goblin, of course." 

'Goblin Rebirth' is out now on Relapse  
[www.Facebook.com/Goblin.Rebirth](http://www.Facebook.com/Goblin.Rebirth)

OUR EMOTIONS AND IT ALWAYS WILL BE THAT WAY"



# NOTHING CHANGES



CANADIAN GRIND INSTITUTION **FUCK THE FACTS** MAY  
BE SOUNDING MORE FEROCIOUS THAN EVER, BUT IT'S IN AN  
INTROSPECTIVE MOOD THAT **TERRORIZER** FINDS FOUNDING  
MEMBER **TOPON DAS**, MUSING ON THE BAND'S NEW-FOUND  
INDEPENDENCE AND THE CHALLENGES OF PARENTHOOD

Words: Kez Whelan

**"I**t's just business as usual," comes the refreshingly hyperbole-free response when Terrorizer asks Fuck The Facts' founding guitarist Topon Das about the band's tenth full-length (and first to be released through the band's own Noise Salvation label), 'Desire Will Rot'. For once though, a bit of the old 'it's our best ever!' rhetoric could be justified here, as the album stands as arguably the most well-rounded and rewarding in the band's fifteen year career.

"The writing process on this one was pretty much the same approach we've had for the last few," says Topon. "Probably the main difference we had compared to [2011's] 'Die Miserable' is the recording. The way we went into it this time was a lot more relaxed. We really almost fuckin' killed ourselves trying to make 'Die Miserable' sound as perfect as possible, and this time we just went in and recorded stuff the best we could, and just went with that, and didn't try to make it fake in any sort of way."

The luxury of being able to record in the band's own Apartment 2 studio is both a blessing and curse, it seems.

"It's awesome to record there because it's our own space and we have all the time in the world, but on the other side of that, it sucks, because we have all the time in the world and it's easy to get carried away with that," he laughs. "We actually recorded this album back in December 2012 and it just sat on a hard drive forever because we didn't have the time to get around to completing it!"

Which is fair enough really; as if having the album to contend with alongside the killer EPs the last few years have yielded (2013's 'Amer' and 2014's 'Abandoned' respectively) wasn't enough, an additional cog had been thrown into the works in the guise of parenthood.

"I don't know how much that's affected my writing style," Topon muses, when asked if having a daughter has affected more than just time keeping. "[It's] more just getting older. I started Fuck The Facts so long ago that it really is me, at a certain period of my life. Topon Das at early to mid twenties is Fuck the Facts, and doing it now, at my age, or all these years later, it's really like I'm kind of channelling myself from all those years ago because I'm definitely not the same person that I was at that point. It doesn't mean that I like the music any less, I definitely love the music that we create and I especially love creating it with the people in my band, but if I was to go out now and start a band, it probably would not be a grindcore band called Fuck The Facts, you know? It would be something completely different. It's weird that I'm kind of grabbing this younger me and doing it, yet I'm this older person with a family and a house, and a business and all these things.

**"B**ut having my daughter around hasn't really changed much," he continues. "I still listen to the same music around the house – I actually just went and played this solo noise performance show a couple of days ago, and we brought her along, made it a family trip and she watched me play. She hasn't seen a Fuck The Facts show yet, but we'll bring her to these sort of things, so she's really involved, she knows what we do. It's been an extremely positive thing in my life having her, I think outside of music she's put so many things into perspective, and a lot of things I used to worry

about a lot, I just don't even really care about any more."

Whilst this new perspective may not have directly influenced the album's musical direction, it has certainly seeped into its lyrical themes.

"Mel [Mongeon, vocals] does all the lyrics, and Marc [Bourgon, bass/backing vocals] has actually started adding a lot more as well, so those guys have a handle on the lyrics but when it comes to naming the album it always falls on my shoulders. I know what the lyrics are, I always try to find a theme that kind of touches me,"

Topon explains. "When I thought

of 'Desire Will Rot', which actually is a lyric on the Fuck The Fucks/Fistfuck split, it just grabbed me and how I feel. When I was in my early twenties and doing this it felt like nothing could stop me, and no matter what, we're gonna go and play shows, anywhere and everywhere, and do this forever, and here I am now – I'm gonna be 40 years old soon, and I don't really have that same twenty year old passion that I did back then. I was talking about it with Mel, the first song is called 'Everywhere Yet Nowhere', and that just talked to me about our early days of touring when we were on the road as much as possible, and it felt like we were hitting a wall. We were playing everywhere we could but we were just coming home poorer and unhappier than before, and I think going through all that brought on this realisation that if we were gonna keep doing this band, we were gonna have to change things. So as much as I love doing the band, and as much as it's very important to me still, it's not the most important thing in my life anymore, as it was for the first ten years. Here we are on this trip, and after a while, you just give up in a way. It seems very negative to say 'we gave up', but if we hadn't have given up a bit we would have destroyed ourselves, and destroyed our lives outside of music." ☹

'Desire Will Rot' is out now on Noise Salvation  
[www.Facebook.com/FuckTheFacts](http://www.Facebook.com/FuckTheFacts)

**"IF I WAS TO GO  
OUT NOW AND  
START A BAND, IT  
WOULD NOT BE A  
GRINDCORE BAND  
CALLED FUCK THE  
FACTS"**

# INTO THE CAULDRON

ONCE AGAIN, HERE'S OUR MONTHLY DELUGE OF ALL THINGS DEATH METAL BROUGHT TO YOU BY OUR RESIDENT CONNOISSEUR...

Words: Olivier 'Zoltar' Badin



PUTRID OFFAL



Until now, **Putrid Offal** were nothing but a footprint in the history book, at best. With an initial lifespan of only three years with just one demo and two splits (one with mincecore legends Agathocles and the other one with the long forgotten Exulceration from Switzerland), at best they were remembered by a handful as the only proper French Carcass devotees that briefly featured Ludovic Loez from Supuration on drums, and had the luxury to be part of the very first CD release put out by cult label Adipocere back in 1992. Yet in retrospect,

they nevertheless symbolise all the turmoil the death metal genre has gone through since its inception, starting in a smelly garage on a boombox and then exploding a few years later worldwide before facing a huge identity crisis, only to come back to life at the turn of the century stronger than ever. When you ask their guitarist and vocalist Franck Peiffer about their shift to a much more industrial sound in the mid-'90s and the subsequent change name (to M. Pheral) that occurred, he doesn't dodge the bullet: "After we had lost our second drummer due to musical differences, we decided not to look for a replacement but to use machines instead. By that time we had already thought of tapping into different and more diverse territories and that decision only pushed more in that direction. But we never forgot about Putrid Offal, the band was just put to sleep for, well, a very long time."

Quite an understatement, considering the recently unleashed double CD 'Premature Necropsy: The Carnage Continues' is their first sign of life in over twenty years. Compiling all their old material plus brand new versions of thirteen of those oldies plus two special covers (S.O.D. and Nerve). Ironically considering their past history, the later was recorded with a drum machine "out of necessity" but since then, Dehuman's Laye Louhenapessy has recently filled this void and the band are set to make their return on stage at a few selected festivals this summer, including Obscene Extreme and Fall Of Summer before releasing their second album, already said to once again see them festering in gore and the early grind/death sound of yore.

Talking of endless suspense, it 'only' took Swedish powerhouse **Wombbath** 22 bloody years to come up with a follow-up to 'Infernal Caustic Torments', their so far sole album. Yes, there was this weird stopgap EP called 'Lavatory' released in '94 with its, erm, superb artwork of a toilet seat decorated with a bottle of champagne, a candle and some flowers (don't ask) but even their guitarist – and these days sole original member – Håkan Stuvemark is so embarrassed about it that he doesn't count it as part of their discography. After the band split, he focused on a more melodic style with In Thy Dreams but after two albums, that ended too after two of their members decided to give priority to Carnal Forge. After a first attempted reunion of the original Wombbath line-up in 2005 for an anniversary show in their hometown of Sala that "soon ran out in the sand", it was the official reissue of 'Infernal Caustic Torments' in 2013 that really reignited the fire, after he had decided to re-record a new version of 'Silent As The Grave' for it, re-titled '2013: Silence Unveiled' for the occasion. Stuvemark set out then to write a whole new album, with the assistance of their original bass player on one song, and asked his friend Jonny Pettersson, with whom he had played with in Skineater, to join on vocals and bass. The resulting full-



length 'Downfall Rising' (due to hit the stores this summer) was mixed by US drummer The Absence's Jeramie Kling, who also ended up playing on it. Since then a full Swedish line-up has been recruited – at least, kind of, as Pettersson and Alex Riglin (guitar) are for the time being living in Bristol. "It's not a big deal as it's quite easy and cheap to fly these days. Plus we're not the kind of band that rehearse very often. We know what we are doing and do it very well when all together!" The irony is that if, with time, Wombbath was lumped into the whole Swedish death metal movement, truth is that 'Infernal Caustic Torments' was way more influenced by the UK and US scenes, with Malevolent Creation's 'Retribution' being one of their role models. Yet its successor is a full-on HM-2 celebration, as Stuvemark admits that the sound of the emblematic effect pedal with all its buttons pushed to the max gives this lifelong Entombed fan "goosebumps". Guess that, just like Putrid Offal, it tends to prove that death metal, well, never truly dies, at least in some people's hearts.

If you're an underground fan up-to-date of what's currently happening in the death metal world, chances are you've fallen under the spell of more than a few Chilean bands lately. Unaussprechlichen Kulen, Magnanimus, Demonic Rage or Putrid Evocation are just some of the many demons that have lately taken the genre back to its natural, moist and decayed habitat with no consideration of anything remotely melodic nor commercial. Like most of them, Santiago's **Praise The Flame** are a classic power-trio proud of their old-school roots. As a matter of fact, their drummer actually had the privilege



to join the country's oldest DM act, Death Yell, three years ago. But in PTF, the one pulling the strings here (literally) is their guitarist and vocalist JJ who's so proud of his creation that he labels himself as satanic, hence its name, "both as a reference to our inner fire and that one flame that allows us not to live our life blindfolded and to Lucifer, the Transgressor and source of our inner strength." Apart from an upcoming split with Abrekadaver, they've put out only one demo during their first three years as a band but such was the quality of 'Profane Cult' that it was quickly re-issued on LP, CD and tape nevertheless. "I don't see Praise The Flame as an old-school death metal

band simply because we didn't start in the late '80s," says JJ. "However, our sound is directly influenced by our elders from that special era and we add more atmosphere, darkness and put our own twist on it." Often described as Vader meets early Morbid Angel, they've added a second guitar player to their line-up, just in time to record their first proper album 'Manifest Rebellion', set to be released next September through Memento Mori records and described by JJ as "nine songs of violent, dark and venomous death metal." In a nutshell, it should be a good representation of why in 2015, the Chilean underground rules all in South America. ☹

**"WE NEVER FORGOT ABOUT PUTRID OFFAL, THE BAND WAS JUST PUT TO SLEEP FOR, WELL, A VERY LONG TIME"**



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"It's all positive. It's a

# OVER FREE AND BURN

**WITH GUITARIST VICTOR GRIFFIN BACK IN THE BAND AND A KILLER NEW ALBUM IN THE FORM OF 'CURIOUS VOLUME', PENTAGRAM HAVE RETURNED FROM THE BRINK WITH A RENEWED SENSE OF PURPOSE. WE CAUGHT UP WITH BASSIST GREG TURLEY TO FIND OUT WHAT IT'S LIKE TO JOIN YOUR FAVOURITE BAND AND RAID BOBBY LIEBLING'S TAPE VAULTS...**

WORDS: JOSÉ CARLOS SANTOS

**"I**t's funny that in all the bands I've been into I've been sort of accused of sounding like Pentagram... and now I'm allowed to, so that's great," says an excited Greg Turley, Pentagram bassist since 2010 after a brief stint in the band during the mid-'90s. Not only is Greg living the dream, he's building it too – for the legendary band's new album 'Curious Volume', arguably their most vibrant and exciting opus since 1994's 'Be Forewarned', he's formed a solid songwriting partnership with returned guitarist Victor Griffin, responsible for eight of the album's eleven songs. It's a duo that works almost telepathically, seeing as Victor is actually Greg's uncle, the bassist having grown up with Pentagram in his blood, heart and soul.

"My uncle taught me how to play guitar, and writing with him was a very natural process," Greg explains. "He had a bunch of parts for a bunch of songs, I had a bunch of parts for a bunch of songs too, so we just started sifting through it, around October last year, and then we went from there. It flowed extremely well, and in the end after the material we put together went through the rest of the guys, it really sounded like a band, and it sounds absolutely like Pentagram. It's like that with Bobby's vocals, even in songs that he didn't write, once he starts singing over them it completely changes the face of the song and turns it into something else. Everything really came together very well."

Of course, vocalist Bobby Liebling remains the undisputable face of the band, despite his well-documented physical frailty. On 'Curious Volume', his haunting voice remains the focal point of everything, and he eerily sounds just like he used to almost 40 years ago as he lays tales of anxiety and isolation all over the big riffs. Also, the remaining three songs were pulled from his "vault", a famous collection of tapes with an immense quantity of material put down during his only songwriting period all those years ago.

"'Lay Down And Die' is one of the old Bobby songs, there's an interesting story about it," Greg reveals. "I have all these old cassettes that Bobby gave me years and years ago, they're pretty much his archives from 1968 to 1972 when he wrote all these songs. 'Lay Down And Die' is actually one of those that I

found and pulled out from those cassettes, when we recorded 'Last Rites', but Bobby didn't necessarily want it recorded, but I've held on to it for five years because I think it's such a great song. I'm really glad that we've got it on this album now, it's one of my all-time favourites.

"To me, going through those tapes feels like going on a treasure hunt each time. I'll listen to them at home often, make notes and everything... I've got four volumes, it's four 90-minute tapes, so there's still some good material there that we might use. It's also great to find early versions of old songs there, like 'Run My Course' for example, there's some scratchy, barebones versions of that in there from 1968 – I wasn't even born then! But there's still plenty of material there that we can use in the future. A lot of the songs were very short and somewhat incomplete, so that opens it up for us to take this or that part and use them to create something new too, we have plenty of options and Bobby loves it when we use something from there."

The biggest compliment, however, that can be paid to the Griffin/Turley writing team is that, if you listen to the album from start to finish without knowing, you really won't be able to tell which songs are the old Bobby songs and which ones are the new ones. Especially because there was a focus on what really makes Pentagram sound like Pentagram this time.

"Everybody talks about Pentagram's earlier simple stuff, songs like 'Relentless', 'Sign Of The Wolf', the 'Day Of Reckoning' album... even the older Bobby material like 'Forever My Queen', that's what people associate instantly with Pentagram, and that's the kind of thing we wanted to capture," says the bassist. "Comparing it to 'Last Rites', for instance, the simplified songwriting and the more raw sound makes the whole thing just come off as much more organic to me. Really stripped down, a couple of guitars, bass, drums and vocals, a really simple approach to recording, and it was with that mindset we went into it. I kept thinking, if we were recording this album right after 'Day Of Reckoning', what would it sound like? That was my personal goal, I want to be in that timeframe. Obviously with the modern production and everything, but ▶

# good time for Pentagram"



## "Going through Bobby's tapes feels like a treasure hunt each time"

going back to those riffs – heavy riffs, catchy riffs, not so many layers and layers, not overthinking a simple idea."

For a band permanently mired in instability almost by definition, having Victor Griffin and Greg Turley in the line-up at this point in time is something that gives it a much-needed rock-solid foundation. Here are two men who fully, deeply understand what Pentagram is about, who can write a classic Pentagram song in their sleep, and since those old tapes aren't going to last forever, who can carry the band as much into the future as their fragile frontman's health will allow. You can almost picture a cartoon with Victor and Greg as big hulking rock warriors carrying Bobby on their shoulders, telling him 'don't worry, bro. We got this.' Mr. Liebling, however, might be stronger these days than we often give him credit for.

"Bobby actually recorded his vocals first, and after we were done with our parts, we went back and listened to them again and we were kind of feeling that they were okay, but they could be better too," Greg recalls, worryingly. But it was okay in the end. "He was actually the one that insisted on wanting to go back and redo everything. What's on the album is the second session, when he went back and did the whole thing again. I think it shows, because he has such passion and all his feelings were coming out, it was a great performance. On most songs there, he still sounds very young and he has the range that he's always had. On top of that, I think in some parts he actually sounds a lot different too, with a voice lower than he's ever had, like he's not stuck in that 'Bobby

voice' and is actually going for other tones now, and I think that's great. Lyrically he's in his usual great form too, there's songs about anxiety, about Bobby's past, about being treated a certain way... they're all pretty transparent, Bobby has a way to put things in a very clear and elegant manner, and everyone can relate to it."

The excitement in Greg's voice is unmistakable – the man loves what he's doing, so much that we wonder if there are ever any moments where the responsibility weighs on him a bit. One of those waking up in the morning, 'holy shit, I'm writing songs for Pentagram' kind of moments.

"Every day!" he exclaims with a booming laugh. "Of course, I've been in the band for a while, but that's my goal, I want to make more Pentagram songs, it's the band I grew up with and the band that I love, it's always on my mind. It comes fairly naturally to me, and that's exactly what I want for fans, I want them to put on the songs and say that they sound exactly like Pentagram. The title-track, for example, which is also another one of my favourite songs on the album, I came up with it towards the end of the recording process, I presented it to Victor and he loved it, he immediately came up with a vocal melody and passed it along to Bobby, and it's a song where we all have our own personal stamp, the guitar tones, that cool bass line, Bobby doing his thing... It's just the best feeling ever, having that initial spark and then seeing the rest of the band taking it up and turning into a Pentagram song. I also have special feelings for 'Devil's Playground', I actually wrote that back in the late '90s, it's been on my personal archives ever since then, and I'm really excited to

finally get that one out there as Pentagram."

There is a saying that the future belongs to god, and in the case of Pentagram this rings a bit truer than usual, with Victor Griffin having found the omnipotent being way back in the '90s and Bobby reportedly having done the same, sort of, in recent times. However, apart from the "no baphomets, no upside-down crosses" bit that Bobby has mentioned several times as a condition for shows, this doesn't seem to permeate much into the songs.

"It's one of things that they believe in, but at the same time it's something that they don't feel the need to wear on their sleeves, so to speak," is Greg's take on it. "Apart from a couple of songs in the past, the themes of Pentagram's songs have always been a sort of a warning, like on 'Review Your Choices' or 'Be Forewarned' for instance. Everybody writes about their passions, but people can be passionate about several things, and in the end this is also entertainment and we all realise that, and there's no need to preach about anything."

Who cares, anyway, with riffs this good? Can we have more soon, please?

"It's all positive. It's a good time for Pentagram. If we can keep Bobby young, keep him as healthy as he can be, everything will stay together and we'll grow even more."

Pentagram, eh? Still a bunch of young kids who just want to grow. Rock 'n' roll will do that to you. 🤘

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# PERFECT SKIN

WITH THE RELEASE OF THEIR SECOND ALBUM 'NATRON', C R O W N HAVE MANAGED TO TAKE THEIR PUNISHING INDUSTRIAL SOUND INTO SEVERAL NEW DIRECTIONS – BUT IT SEEMS THERE'S STILL A WAY TO GO UNTIL GUITARIST/VOCALIST STEPHANE AZAM IS GOING TO BE COMPLETELY SATISFIED...

Words: Kevin Stewart-Panko

**W**e here at Terrorizer are not only on the constant look out for new bands, new sounds and new albums to file away alongside the bands, sounds and albums we've loved since the lot of us were knee-high to a grasshopper. Similarly, finding novel ways and phrases to discuss our passion is also a quest on the hack's side of the page. To wit, we'd like to thank Stephane Azam, guitarist/vocalist for French industrial/doom/sludge outfit C R O W N, for his quip about "the pathology of the non-satisfied guy." Here, Azam is referring to himself and the obsessive meticulousness involved in creating new material, specifically for sophomore album 'Natron'; the writing, re-writing, poring over each and every detail and whipping out of the fine tooth comb in the quest for crushing perfection.

"Every new album is a new approach for me," explains the frontman with a joviality that belies the harrowing darkness of C R O W N's sound. "I don't want to do the same thing. I like surprising myself and the listener and always push the limits. It can be risky, but I like this kind of writing process. [Debut album] 'Psychurgy' was a really monolithic album, really dense, maybe too much, but also really heavy. For 'Natron', I

was into bringing in more dynamics, melodies and a lot of contrast. This time my friend David Husser mixed and produced it. He helped a lot with dynamics, giving it a real industrial touch that was missing on the previous album and with production details that are really effective and original. He has an industrial music background, so he knows exactly how to push music in a good way and to improve everything to get the best result. But, as usual, I'm an eternally non-satisfied guy! Sometimes you have to say, 'Ok stop,' or you're gonna spend five months on a song and still not be satisfied because you have the pathology of the non-satisfied guy!"

Album number two employs more musical space; there's a thick density to 'Natron', it may be less typical, but still effectively spooky and inky. Some parts crush like Neurosis and/or Godflesh, others throb and pulsate similar to the peak days of Nitzer Ebb, KMFDM and Front 242, the result of Azam making a conscious effort to keep pressing buttons instead of using a real-live human skin beater.

"Programming drums is fucking boring," he laughs, "but I'm a bit lazy and I wasn't really satisfied with 'Psychurgy's' drumming, especially the sounds I was using. It was more

close to organic drum sound, but for 'Natron' I wanted real crushing industrial drums, so after [I programmed them] David just reprogrammed all the drums in a industrial way."

As a result and as one might expect, the dichotomy of the industrial versus the organic ends up seeping into 'Natron's' overall theme.

"'Natron' is a direct reference to this famous lake in Tanzania," he says. "Some animals are petrified after diving in it, some of them can't live there, some can and it's a metaphoric vision of our time. We're all diving into new technologies, new extremes, new possessions and something really out of control that will lead to a de-socialized and petrified/fossilized society. I wanted to have an animal reference, so Maks, our graphic designer, modelled a mandible and jaw of a carnivore. It's not recognisable, but it represents a certain aggression. The jaw is made to look like [it's made out of] china as well, which confers it a certain fragility, because the subject of 'Natron' is material which transforms the subject completely. It is this double state which I wanted to symbolize." ☪

'Natron' is out now on Candlelight  
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 HUMANS HAVE DESTROYED EVERYTHING"

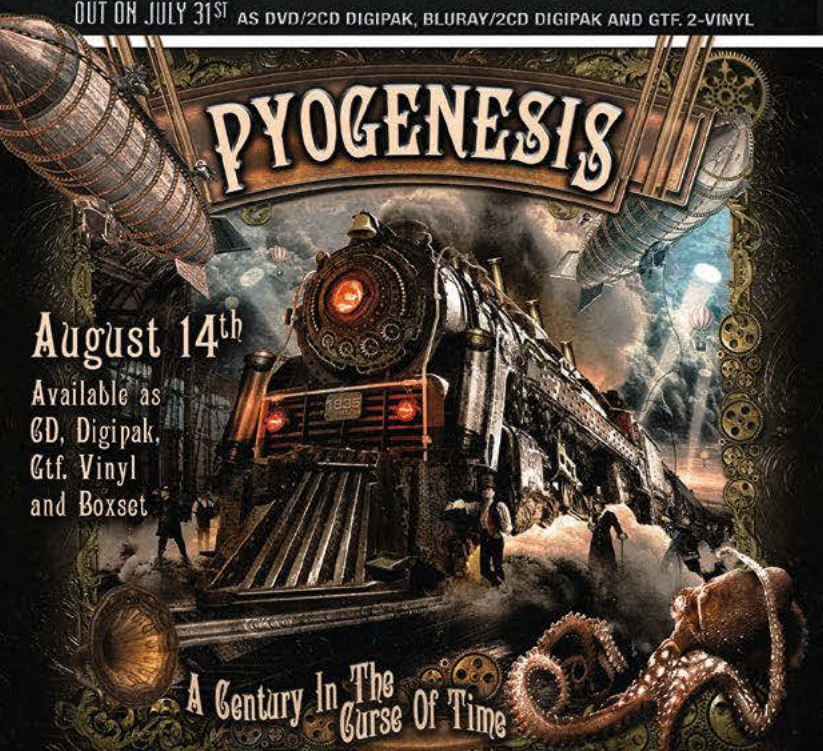


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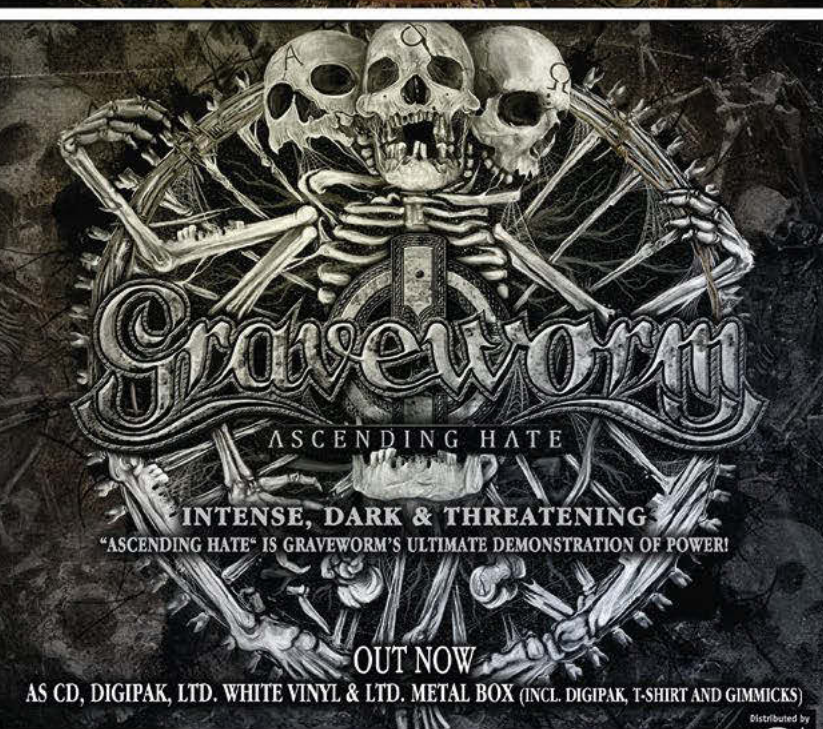


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# STATE OF THE WORLD ADDRESS



**“IT’S NOT SO MUCH DEVOLUTION, BUT IT’S MORE ABOUT THE DOMINO EFFECT OF HOW OVERPOPULATION AND CONSUMPTION COULD BE OUR DOWNFALL”**

WITH 'THE ANTHROPOCENE EXTINCTION', SAN DIEGO'S CATTLE DECAPITATION  
HAVE DELIVERED EASILY ONE OF DEATH METAL'S MASTERPIECES OF 2015. FRONTMAN  
TRAVIS RYAN REFLECTS ON THE BAND'S CONTINUED UPWARD TRAJECTORY OF  
POPULARITY AND MORE IMPORTANTLY, THE EXTINCTION OF MANKIND

Words: Kevin Stewart-Panko

S



“I consider us very fucking lucky!” exclaims Cattle Decapitation’s Travis Ryan. The frontman for the San Diego-based, human-hating death metal institution is speaking to the recent surge in recognition and popularity the band he fronts has experienced over the course of the last two album cycles. Essentially, he’s expressing gratitude for the fact that not only do people still care about the quartet almost twenty years into the game, but that the band’s profile continues on an upward trajectory.

“There’s an in-studio video that we have coming out soon where [producer] Dave [Otero] makes the comment that he thinks that the magic that comes out of Cattle Decapitation comes from us being so drastically different. We’re different personalities, our musical tastes are all over the map and so are where we’re from – [drummer] Dave [McGraw] is from Chile, [bassist] Derek [Engemann] and [guitarist] Josh [Elmore] are from the Midwest and I’m a born and raised Southern Californian – but there’s a cataclysmic moment that makes what you’re hearing. Luckily for us, it’s appealing to the people who are buying our records which helps Metal Blade want to keep us around. Otherwise, I don’t know how many people would have heard of us. We’ve really lucked out; not many bands go higher and higher in the quality of material they’re delivering, popularity and the positive perception in the public eye this late into their careers. Usually it goes the other way. I don’t know how much of it is luck or hard work, but I feel very fortunate.”

Luck and hard work are an undeniably large part of it, but so is the amount that can be chalked up to good music. Three years ago, the band released their sixth album, ‘Monolith Of Humanity’ which was widely recognised as where things came to a cohesive peak for Cattle Decapitation. Not only did the band’s ongoing combination of technically crystalline death metal and sewer filth reeking grind find its own uniquely (dis)harmonious balance, there was also a keen attention paid to the details of song writing that made songs like ‘A Living, Breathing Defecating Piece Of Meat’ and ‘Forced Gender Reassignment’ both toe-tapping and head-crushing triumphs (let’s not forget about the latter’s unforgettable video). As well, Travis himself felt more comfortable using his singing voice; a conflagration these very pages previously described as a combination of Napalm Death’s Mitch Harris, W.A.S.P.’s Blackie Lawless, Gridlink/Discordance Axis’ Jon Chang and Annal Nathrakh’s Dave Hunt.

“They’re scratchy and sort of melodic,” he says in a flurry of self-description, “and could almost be perceived as clean vocals. Though, I would *not* call them that, but I get it and see what people mean.”

Either way, his expanding vocal capability was utilised as another weapon in the arsenal that helped to distinguish Cattle Decapitation from the genre and their peers. Combined, the whole glorious mess got under the skin and nails and into the ears and brains of fans and critics alike, providing not just a powerful listening experience, but giving the band something to keep in mind for their forthcoming seventh album, ‘The Anthropocene Extinction’.

“The thing that had the most impact on the new record was the fact we had a yardstick to measure everything against. We knew we had our work cut out for us because the ‘Monolith...’ record was so well-received. We write for two groups of people: the fans and ourselves, and the biggest hurdle was to give them something they would like. We paid a little more attention to what they liked about that release and tried to remember that when we were writing.”

As expected, ‘The Anthropocene Extinction’ offers nods to and does indeed pick up where ‘Monolith Of Inhumanity’ left off, though there are noticeable differences in how much more dynamic the new record is in comparison. The band appear to have jumped into the latest album’s fire unafraid to take their foot off the gas pedal and have had no problem including wide swaths of atmosphere and bipolar moods to the metal they long ago proved themselves accomplished at creating and playing.

“I think it’s pretty much a step forward. I think that even if we had taken a step to the side it would have been fine because kids were saying stuff like, ‘Dude, if you just give us ‘Monolith Part Two’, we’ll be happy!’ We tried as much as we could to not just do that and to show up ‘Monolith...’ Actually, the working title for a while was ‘Schmonolith’, as in ‘Monolith, Schmonolith,’” he laughs.

“It boils down to a few things,” he continues, discussing what was in the forefront ►

# "IF ILSAHN CAN GET AWAY WITH IT ON AN EMPEROR RECORD, THEN WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO!"

of the band's mind during 'The Anthropocene Extinction' writing sessions. "This stuff is way more focused, heavier and a lot more metal. With this album, and the last one, there are a lot more parts to latch onto, whether it's head banging or melodic vocals or something you can hum, there's something there for people to connect with. Also, we're getting older – especially Josh and I – and we feel like we have less and less to lose. Therefore, we feel more comfortable going out on a limb as far as pushing boundaries of what's acceptable under the extreme metal umbrella and adding clean vocals, or whatever the fuck you call them, was something I've just eased into over the past ten years. It's all about just exploring and experimenting, even with the low, growly vocals. We hadn't really seen a lot of other people doing it, so we figured 'Why not?' I think it came down to one of the other guys saying, 'If Ilsaahn can do it and get away with it on an Emperor record, then we should be able to!'"

**"Y**eah, we're pretty fucked," says Ryan with a reasoned sigh. The topic of this particular tête-à-tête between Terrorizer and Cattle Decapitation has inexplicably, but also explicably, turned towards 'The Terminator'. In one of the series' films – "Or was it all of them?" comes the shared joke – Arnold Schwarzenegger's time-travelling cyborg flatly, though still with that recognisable Austrian accent, states something along the lines of "It's in humanity's nature to destroy yourselves."

"That's the sort of thing that's been permeating this band's lyrical content for years," says Travis, agreeing with The Governor, or at least his writers and script supervisors. "Even in our imagery. That's the reason we use the ouroboros. It's been used through all sorts of cultures, but for us it signifies the self-devouring nature of man." He chuckles ominously and knowingly before continuing: "It's funny because, ironically enough, it comes down to intelligence, that we have the ability and the intelligence to do that. That's what separates us from all other beings on this earth, and that's total Cattle Decapitation irony right there."

The ongoing topic of humanity killing itself along each step of the way, not to mention that at almost every juncture, mankind's every creation, development, invention and course of action, whether deliberate or with good intentions in mind or not, appears to be contributing to our demise, hasn't escaped the wrath of 'The Anthropocene Extinction'.

The music is harsh and heavy, of course, but the conceptual storyline Ryan devised is just as brutal and unforgiving. The theme of the album expectedly surrounds itself around the continued desecration and degradation of ourselves and our planet. However, the angle from which the vocalist/lyricist approaches it is definitely not one of sympathy. There's no palliative, environmental caress claiming that the few mistakes we've made are in any way reversible. Nah, as far as Travis Ryan is concerned, we've been fucked by our own hand, dude. And if you ever needed any indication, join him in taking a look at what's become known

as the Great Pacific Garbage Patch, the 700,000 square kilometers (and that's the most conservative estimate on record) of plastic floating in the world's largest ocean.

"Just like 'Monolith...', [the album's theme] represents a surrealist fantasy where devolution is happening in a blink of eye. That obviously isn't how things go, but for extreme death metal and an album cover, it works, y'know? But what you're now seeing is almost a century of the by-product of overpopulation and [it's showing up with] all the plastic in the ocean that the animals are eating. Albatrosses are mistaking the plastics that are bogging down the ocean for krill; they're eating it, they're ingesting it and they're fucking falling dead on the beaches and as they decay they reveal the plastic bits inside them that are killing them all off. It's more of turning the tables on humanity and more of our 'classic' way of presenting a theme. It's not so much devolution this time, but it's more about the domino effect of how overpopulation and consumption could be our downfall, if a comet or a nuclear arms war doesn't do us in first!

"I read something the other day that said we'll be extinct in forty years. It's hard to tell. If you think about how it's only been since around the 1950s that the plastics industry got really huge and that now there are areas in the ocean that are completely comprised of islands of plastic... it hasn't been that long and I think that's telling us something. Who knows? We might have less than forty years!" 🐮

**'The Anthropocene Extinction' is available August 7 on Metal Blade [www.CattleDecapitation.com](http://www.CattleDecapitation.com)**





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# INVOCATION

**FOLLOWING THE DEMISE OF AKERCOCKE, THE ANTICHRIST IMPERIUM WAS BORN IN 2010 BUT ABRUPTLY DISAPPEARED. TERRORIZER CHATS TO DAVID GRAY AND SAM LOYNES ABOUT WHY THIS ALBUM NEEDED TO BE RELEASED.**

**Words: Ross Baker**

Akercocke, London's leading lights of the UK extreme metal scene broke up at the height of their powers following frontman Jason Mendonça's decision to retreat from the music scene. Undaunted, guitarist Matt Wilcock and drummer David Gray took the ideas they were working on for the next record and formed The Antichrist Imperium with Ted Maul bassist Nick Hassan. A more straightforward take on death metal, the group made an appearance at the 2010 Damnation Festival before vanishing into thin air. Once Akercocke's break-up was confirmed in 2012, Gray returned alongside former Akercocke bassist Peter Benjamin and Diminished Fifth guitarist Sam Loynes with the progressive extreme metal act Voices – so why was it so important that The Antichrist Imperium was brought to life too? Now back in action with

Sam Bean (formerly of The Berzerker and Mithras) taking Nick's place, David Gray takes up the tale explaining why it took so long to get the correct material and personnel together.

"These songs deserved more than to be consigned to history but in 2010 we just wanted to show people we were still around. No one was interested in helping us release it and the material hadn't fully developed. Now we have this fledgling label that's ready to get behind this madness and pump it out there. Sam Bean's vocals were done in the studio we used to play in with The Berzerker and we got Dan [Abela, Voices bassist] to produce. We did this totally in house with no outside help from anyone and I am proud we did that. If you heard what we were doing in 2010, it wasn't half

as extreme and progressive as what we are doing now."

Revisiting such material could have been a less than enjoyable experience, but that's not how Mr Gray tells it. "It was great sitting down with Matt digging through old tapes. We were amazed at how strong the material sounded five years later. Everyone who has heard this material has been so positive."

"There's a lot of black humour in what we are doing here," Sam confirms. "It's a nice juxtaposition between that and working on material for Voices. I wrote the lyrics for 'The Spiritual Rapist' while I was skiving at work! This album doesn't need a huge concept like Voices does."

"That's why I brought this guy in to do the vocals!" David notes. "Our first singer Nick Hassan wasn't right for this project. We needed more vocal variation [and] wanted some clean parts. He is a more traditional death metal singer and we wanted to be more than just a satanic death metal band."

A.I.'s self-titled album is sure to appeal to fans of the protagonists' prior works, featuring David's inhuman blasts, relentless tremolos and several vicious hymns to Beelzebub. "Seven of the nine songs were

**"IT CAME TOGETHER SO NATURALLY SO DO? THAT WAS THE SPIRIT OF AK**



# SUMMONING

written for the last Akercocke album," he confirms. "When we first wrote songs for Antichrist..., they were in a more Vital Remains, straightforward brutal fashion with a few ideas scavenged from Akercocke. The material we have written since is far more complex and progressive. If we had made the album in 2010 it might have been more brutal but would have lacked depth."

"It's much more than just a satanic death metal album," confirms Sam. "We want to be extreme and challenging and work without any boundaries."

Following the demise of Akercocke, David and Sam along with Peter Benjamin spent time cultivating a new identity as Voices, ditching the Savile Row suits and images of Baphomet to carve a gritty modern vision of bleak post-modern Britain. Why return to Satanism?

"Matt and David are obsessed with Satan!" says Sam. "Jason and I were going to do vocals for 'Kill For Satan' which was a song written for Akercocke. We didn't want to compromise by rewriting a great track. There is nothing more funny than calling a song 'Kill For Satan'! It came together so naturally so why should we adapt what we do? That was

the spirit of Akercocke – not giving a fuck!"

"To me Akercocke, Voices and The Antichrist Imperium exemplify that London sound," says David. "When Jason and I started playing together no one was doing what we did. No one sounded like us then, and they don't now! We listened to Killing Joke and Voivod when other bands just tried to sound like everyone else."

"Akercocke was the blueprint for the London sound and Voices is an extension of that," Sam concurs. "The Antichrist Imperium will not make traditional death metal records. It's not like a Krisiun record. There are influences from Obituary to country music here."

Voices' 'London' record is arguably one of the strongest releases of the fertile UK extreme metal scene but the duo are keen to fend off the assumption that The Antichrist Imperium is a side project. "This is no side project and it's not a one off either," says David. "Matt and I are already working on ideas for the next album. The beauty of technology is that we can compose things with Matt and Sam Bean online while they're in Australia. Matt and Sam write and arrange most of the material and Sam works on the vocals afterwards. It's completely

different from our method of writing Voices songs. Voices is about improvising and feeding off each other's emotions. There's nothing contrived about the way either band works. The songwriting approach and sound are different but the core of who we are will always remain."

Before Sam and David join Voices comrades Peter and Dan for an evening of rehearsal, David briefly reveals the process of preparing the third Voices record. "It won't be like 'London'. That chapter has been closed. I won't be doing the narration again. It was great having that concept but the whole point of this band is to be moving forward constantly. I am available for radio however!"

"The whole idea of being extreme is not working within the parameters others try and force you into," Sam concludes. "The bad dream of 'London' has been dreamt but we will come up with something equally disturbing." ☘

'The Antichrist Imperium' is out August 7th on Apocalyptic Witchcraft Recordings [www.Facebook.com/pages/The-Antichrist-Imperium](http://www.Facebook.com/pages/The-Antichrist-Imperium)

## SO WHY SHOULD WE ADAPT WHAT WE AKERCOCKE – NOT GIVING A FUCK!"

# SELECTED AND DISSECTED

10 PURE GENIUS  
8-9 POT OF GOLD  
6-7 PASSES THE TIME

4-5 PASS  
2-3 PISS POOR  
1 PILE OF SHITE

## ALBUM OF THE MONTH INTO THE ABYSS



### CHELSEA WOLFE

'Abyss'

SARGENT HOUSE

**P**ain Is Beauty', the title of Chelsea Wolfe's previous full-length album released back in 2013, encapsulates in many ways the reason why so many listeners, from all quadrants of music – not only just our own delightful Terrorizer universe of darkness and heaviness and frequent weirdness – have formed deep connections with her music since her name started to be spread around like wildfire with the release of her first couple of records. Chelsea is, stylistically speaking, a restless, ever-moving artist: no two of her records sound the same, no two seem to come from the same place or indeed go to the same places either; 'Abyss' is yet another clear example of this, and yet there is an intangible common denominator in all of them that makes them instantly, unmistakably hers. A crucial part of that ghostly binding is the way in which the pain and the beauty are hopelessly tangled together. As harsh and unforgiving as her music has been – lest we forget a lot of us discovered her with that shadowy, mind-blowing cover of Burzum's 'Black Spell Of Destruction' – there is always an element of ethereal beauty to it, and conversely, as heart-stoppingly beautiful as some of her compositions have been, they always seem permeated by a constant, tainting

anguish that only heightens the sense and perception of their intrinsic beauty. It is teetering on this narrow precipice that Chelsea has made 'Abyss', her best work yet, by far, which is saying something already. A simple press of play for the very first time plunges us into the industrialised bleakness of 'Carrion Flowers', a drone/doom affair if done by any other artist, a chilling descent into the namesake abyss that follows when Chelsea lays the deeply, deeply meaningful "We learned how on our own / Never needing help from you" words on top of the chaos that surrounds the listener by the point she enters the song. It would be easy to assume that not a lot of light will seep in from this moment on, but it does, oh, it does. The overarching theme of the album is the struggle the singer has had with sleep paralysis, but when something like 'Crazy Love' appears in the middle of the album, mostly acoustic and perhaps her most brilliantly (and yet very simply)



crafted song since the heart-stopping 'Sunstorm' from the 'Unknown Rooms' album, it's as if the paralysis is lifted, as if cold bodies begin to thaw momentarily, a feeling reinforced by the equally hauntingly beautiful 'Simple Death' and 'Survive' before being plunged into

the deepest parts of the abyss the two final songs of the album offer. In the end, it's what stays with you of 'Abyss' that really matters, it's the images you take from this plunge that define the lasting power of this music. And whether it's broken-hearted sirens calling, whales chanting mournfully from afar, a chorus of devils singing as they pull you down or just your inner voice not letting you sleep and not letting you awake either, something from 'Abyss' will stay with you, something from it will change you. And that is a feat that not many albums can claim.

[9] JOSÉ CARLOS SANTOS



## THE ANTICHRIST IMPERIUM

'The Antichrist Imperium'

APOCALYPTIC WITCHCRAFT

**C**hances are, many of you are still digesting and decoding, if not trying to make sense of, Voices' two releases thus far, 'London' and 'Voices From The Human Forest Produce A Fugue Of Imaginary Rain'. If you still want to experience blackened death metal with an avant-garde tinge, but want to give your brain a day off, this new band featuring David Gray, alongside Matt Wilcock, Sam Joseph Loynes and Sam Bean, is as good a place to start as any. On the surface, The Antichrist Imperium could be construed as the angular



impenetrability of Voices and the aristocratic death metal of Gray and Wilcock's Akercocke smoothed out by the sweeping melodic sense of Bean's criminally overlooked Senseless project. The album is a darkened expanse of hyper-speedy riffs sculpted by the quartet making staccato moves, sharp accents and slick black/death lurches as a seamless unit. And when they slide, as they often do, into sequences of surprising melody and acoustics, or go in the opposite direction towards the sort of harsh atonality normally associated with

latter-period Emperor ('The Spiritual Rapist' and 'The Stiffening Of Death', respectively), the transitions are as natural and flowing as sweat down a decathlete's butt crack. Throw in a noticeable number of lengthy classic rock/metal-inspired leads and touches of shredding guitar duels ('Silhouette And Flame') for extra seasoning and you have an album that tickles both the listeners' brutality fancy as well as the thirst for melody and harmonic consonance the human ear naturally pines for.

[7.5] KEVIN STEWART-PANKO

## BLASTING FOR SATAN

HERE ARE THE NUTRITIOUS INGREDIENTS THAT COMPRISE THE ANTICHRIST IMPERIUM

### AKERCOCKE

Both David Gray and Matt Wilcock played in England's finest suited and booted death metallers

### THE BERZERKER

Matt also played with these cyber-grin nutjobs, as did bassist/vocalist Sam Bean

### MITHRAS

Sam also toured with Mithras, standing in for original frontman Rayner Cross

### VOICES

And, coming full circle, both David and vocalist/guitarist Sam Loynes also do time in Voices

### ACT OF DEFIANCE

'Birth And The Burial'

METAL BLADE



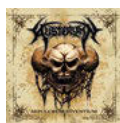
**A**lthough everyone is putting an amicable spin on it, we're sure there's some considerable satisfaction for Chris Broderick and Shawn Drover to stick two fingers up at their previous employer, Dave Mustaine, by releasing a collection of their own material that is effortlessly and consistently more vital and vicious than anything Megadeth have managed for over twenty years. Joined by bassist Matt Bachand from Shadows Fall and vocalist Henry Derek from Scar Tissue, they were always going to hit the ground running, and this is a perfectly produced, super slick slice of savage, technical modern thrash, peppered liberally with Broderick's trademark fluid leads and some genuinely catchy riffs.

[7.5] IAN GLASPER

### AUSTERYMN

'Sepulcrum Viventium'

MEMENTO MORI



**T**his debut full-length is a victory in itself for these Staffordshire thrashers who had to go through several break-ups, two decades of frustration and two styles and band shifts before settling for classic sounding death metal. These eleven tracks betray the age of its just-turned-40 creators as Austerymn care little about the current scene standards, nor are they taking a too rigid and specific road. So instead of desperately trying to sound, say, Swedish, 'Sepulcrum Viventium' goes shopping, collecting elements from both the mid-'90s European and US scenes, from Morgoth to Bolt Thrower and Massacre. A simple yet rewarding formula that even works when confined to one minute and sixteen seconds like on 'Necrolation'. Efficiency over originality then, but who's complaining?

[7] OLIVIER 'ZOLTAR' BADIN

### BARSHASKETH

'Ophidian Henosis'

BLUT & EISEN



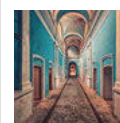
**E**dinburgh's Barshasketh have somewhat of a cult underground following. Their last album 'Sitra Achra' received generous praise, but the former New Zealand based four-piece have blown all their previous achievements out of the water with the mighty 'Ophidian Henosis'. The record harnesses the spirit of old whilst drawing from the power of modern occult black metal, creating a multi-layered sound which only becomes more compelling by each listen. The band have truly stepped their game up here; masterfully crafted riffs, stygian melodies and vehemently hellish vocals capture the true spirit of the genre. Save a spot in your end of year list; Barshasketh are set to dominate with the Scottish flag held high.

[8] BETH AVISON

### BLACK BOOK LODGE

'Entering Another Measure'

MIGHTY MUSIC



**D**enmark's Black Book Lodge deliver a dream-like emotional barrage of mind-altering prog rock. The musical soundscape that the band creates on their second album, 'Entering Another Measure', is both expansive and elegantly balanced, combining mournful vocals, inventive guitars and a pleasantly rumbling rhythm section. They're getting sick of Soundgarden comparisons, so let's say that Black Book Lodge fall somewhere between Muse and Mastodon. Their acclaimed 2014 album 'Tundra' consisted of songs the band had written and self-released two years previously, so they were desperate to get their new stuff out. The follow-up may lack the impact of the debut, but it is more mature, bold and often beautiful. An album of intrigue, complexity and freedom.

[8] STEVE BIDMEAD

### ATHEIST

'Unquestionable Presence'

SEASON OF MIST



**W**e will assume you are familiar with this unquestionable classic, so let's focus on why you need to buy it again 24 years after its initial release, aside from the fact that your original copy might be totally worn out after you, reader of good taste, listened to it to death during your formative death metal years. Well, for the same reason you got Relapse's Death reissues, to put it simply. The amount of pre-production demos and instrumental/alternative outtakes tacked at the end of the eight remastered tracks is staggering, and after that there's still an extra DVD with over 80 minutes of never-before-seen footage from the band's personal archives. As a historical document, it's as comprehensive as any fan would ever hope for.

[8] JOSÉ CARLOS SANTOS

### BARBATOS

'Straight Metal War'

HELLS HEADBANGERS



**A**ppreciation for Japan's Barbatos is contingent on your embrace of (or ability to ignore) political incorrectness and whether or not you mind your metal hitting every branch whilst falling out of the Dumb Tree. Like that creepy uncle hanging alone in the corner at family gatherings, Yasuyuki Suzuki (also of Abigail) has us wondering what's going through his head outside of simple-stupid heavy metal. 'Rocking Metal Sluts', 'Goodbye High School Girls', 'Seven Teen' and 'Fly To The Sexual World' may spit screaming, blues-tinged solos and hilarious moaning vocals in the face of present-day sensitivity, but the fact is that, despite sounding like it was recorded in a boiler room, 'Straight Metal War' is an as-advertised punky thrashing speed metal triumph.

[7] KEVIN STEWART-PANKO

### BATTLECROSS

'Rise To Power'

METAL BLADE



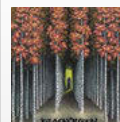
**C**ontinuing the sterling work displayed on 'Pursuit Of Honour' and 'War Of Will', Battlecross are determined to blaze a trail with their ultra-intense death/thrash metal, and, having honed their craft on countless world tours these last few years, they're sounding tighter and more technical than ever. Unfortunately, as is often the way with some of this over-produced modern thrash, the accomplished fretwork and blistering blastbeats might set the pulse racing during listening, but there's little to stimulate the emotions or linger in the heart after the final cymbal crash has diminished. Vocalist Kyle Gunther certainly left everything in the vocal booth, seemingly spewing his lungs up for his art, but it all remains oddly soulless.

[6] IAN GLASPER

### BLACK QUEEN

'The Directress'

SELF-RELEASE



**F**ormed by original Assück bassist Pete Jay in the late '90s, San Francisco's Black Queen are a highly intriguing prospect. Those expecting the grind carnage of Pete's former outfit will be disappointed however, as the band favour a more progressive and atmospheric take on blackened death metal. They cover a lot of ground on album number two, from the sluggish, atonal grooves of 'Silentium' and '3rd Key' to 'The Name Of Snakes' boisterous d-beat battery; there's even some synth-laden death rock on 'Forever Daggers', a morose yet upbeat ditty that sounds like Carnivore and Mortuary Drape beating the living shit out of Goblin. Throw in some cameos from Witch Mountain's Uta Plotkin and Leviathan's Wrest, and you've got one fascinatingly bizarre record indeed.

[7] KEZ WHELAN

# SELECTED AND DISSECTED

"GRIND WITH A LITTLE MORE GOING ON UPSTAIRS"



## FUCK THE FACTS

'Desire Will Rot'

NOISE SALVATION

As frenzied and unpredictable as some of their output has been, Fuck The Facts are a rare example of a grindcore act that consistently manage to hit that sweet spot between face-ripping aggression and superior songwriting chops. In that respect, 'Desire Will Rot' – the Canadians' first full-length since parting ways with Relapse – does not disappoint. Opener 'Everywhere Yet Nowhere' explodes into life amid a flurry of blast beats and frantic, mathcore-inspired riffing, before frontwoman Mel Mongeon enters the fray with her scathing vocal attack. 'Shadows Collide' follows suit, introducing more squealing dissonance and stop-on-a-dime tempo changes à la Pig Destroyer, before guitarist and lynchpin Topon Das changes things up with a surprisingly slick and melodic solo. A 30-second snatch of skronky, Gorguts-esque riffing heralds the arrival of 'Solitude', while elsewhere 'Prey' features an equally brief excursion into desperate, downtrodden sludge.



But while Fuck The Facts are clearly skilled at cramming multiple ideas into a short space of time, it is during the album's more drawn-out second half that they really spread their wings. On 'Circle', ghostly ambience is gradually consumed by waves of feedback and mechanical noise, resembling Godflesh played at quarter-speed through a wind tunnel, while 'False Hope' and 'Nothing Changes' serve to further highlight their progressive tendencies, in addition to some choice doom riffage. Savage, creative, and unafraid to journey off the beaten path, 'Desire Will Rot' should appeal to listeners who likes their grind with a little more going on upstairs.

[8] MIKE KEMP

## OUROBOROS IS BROKEN

GUITARIST TOPON DAS ON THE ADDITION OF AMBIENT TRACK 'CIRCLE'

"It's based on the four seasons, it starts with summer and goes into fall, winter and spring, which is kind of like the rebirth. I really loved doing it, and that part of the album probably went through the most changes, with the band discussing how we were going to do it because it's so different. I love it, and I think it transitions into the

final part of the album perfectly, but I can see a lot of people who are wanting blastbeats and screaming and stuff going, 'alright, I can probably skip this track'. [Laughs] It was also my little tribute to Mr. Bungle. A lot of people won't get it, but one of my influences when I was creating that was the song 'The Bends', which is on 'Disco Volante' by Mr. Bungle."

## C.R.O.W.N.

'Natron'

CANDLELIGHT



It's been a long time coming but there seems to be an industrial revolution brewing in the extreme music world.

For a quite a while now industrial metal has been a rather weak proposition but with bands like 3TEETH and C.R.O.W.N. it seems that the anger and filth has come back to the genre. It would be hard to play slow, dragging industrial riffs without Godflesh being mentioned, and yes, they are obviously an influence, but so are Neurosis (check out the bass breakdown in 'Tension Of Duality') and the '80s goth vibe present on both 'Fossils' and 'Flames' make this a varied and excellent listen.

[7.5] ALEX BONIWELL

## CUT UP

'Forensic Nightmares'

METAL BLADE



The putrid corpse of Vomitory has barely been laid to rest but vocalist/bassist Eric Runqvist and drummer Tobias Gustafsson have rapidly returned to action with this vociferous debut release. Certainly the fetid stench of their prior endeavours has not been washed away but there is a further emphasis on technicality with the drums sounding particularly impressive. It is this clinical and precise approach however, which has sacrificed a portion of the raw intensity which allowed the protagonists to forge such a formidable reputation. Foregoing a portion of surgical precision would be beneficial in that respect. Dissecting the best parts of the Swedish and American scene, 'Forensic Nightmares' lacks the decay and grime required to truly excite.

[6] ROSS BAKER

## BLASPHEMY

'Fallen Angel Of Doom'

NUCLEAR WAR NOW!/ROSS BAY CULT



As thrash found itself in its death-throes at the twilight of the '80s, bludgeoned by a wave of new bands far more brutal in outlook, one band in particular stood out from the new breed. There were not many bands that explicitly looked to Sarcófago for image and musical inspiration at that time, but Canada's Blasphemy took the influence (the Satanic lyrics, the make-up, the bullets), multiplied it, and drenched the result in angel dust that stills stands as a monument to unequalled barbarous fury. Defining the adjective 'relentless', there is no let-up from beginning to end. The moment the title track kicks in following a suitably dark intro is still the stuff of harrowing, classic legend.

[9] GUY STRACHAN

## COFFINS

'Craving To Eternal Slumber'

HAMMERHEART



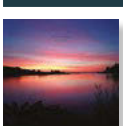
As far as bands consistently putting out solid releases goes, the Land of the Rising Sun is on a pretty strong foot. Step forward Coffins, the well-known death/doom outfit from Tokyo that are one of the best examples of this. Their most recent EP 'Craving To Eternal Slumber' is no exception; it's a non-stop barrage of filth encrusted wretchedness from start to finish. If you like your death metal with a grind edge and the atmosphere of a bubbling pit then you need to pick this up. Casual listeners of the band may not be interested due to the lack of variation but long-time fans will be spinning this for a long time to come.

[7] BETH AVISON

## CARLTON MELTON

'Out To Sea'

IMPORTANT



This fifth proper full-length – in between many splits – by these San Franciscan space travellers is their second proper attempt after last year's 'Always Even' at taming down their art without losing its spontaneity. Prior to this, this trio's purely instrumental nuggets felt like long, cool and very psychedelic jams captured in the rehearsal room almost by mistake and without much after thought. But with as much as eleven songs, and only two of them stepping over that dreaded ten minute mark, 'Out To Sea' puts forward a more classic rock format and tries to add the word concision to their vocabulary, even if it mostly comes down to wild fuzz parties for psychonauts only, transfigured by vintage keyboards loops à la early Pink Floyd.

[6.5] OLIVIER 'ZOLTAR' BADIN

## CONNOISSEUR

'Stoner Justice'

TANKCRIMES



Saying that Oakland's Connoisseur enjoy a little weed is like saying, well, that Connoisseur enjoy A LOT of weed! Singular lyrical and lifestyle obsessions aside, the band ply their resin-soaked sludge with the sort of chaos that unfurls after you've smoked enough bud to tranquilise a camel and you're at the stage where every spoken word is a philosophically brilliant solution to the world's problems and every musical note played is an artistic masterclass. 'Stoner Justice' possesses as much of a loose feel as commitment to peppering stoner rock tropes with grind bursts and doomy sustained guitars and powerhouse drumming. Sleep smoking a bowl and trying their hand at powerviolence seems like a decent comparison.

[7] KEVIN STEWART-PANKO

## THE AFTERNOON GENTLEMEN

'ST L/P'

SELF-RELEASED

It's difficult for a grind band to sound like they have a sense of humour without being self-consciously zany or wacky. All credit to Leeds' The Afternoon Gentlemen, then, for managing to sound neither completely po-faced nor as if they're trying to show us how KerAZZ they are. Having built a name for themselves in the underground as the drinking man's grind band, their first album shows that they've learned lessons from powerviolence luminaries Spazz, rather than just trying to sound like them. It's all go, no slow, with elements of grind, powerviolence and other fast stuff on the same Venn diagram. There's common ground with some German bands too, particularly nutcases Japanische Kampfhörspiele and maybe



even Yacopsæ in places, thanks to the Gents' stop-start riffs. If you wish grind bands were more interested in cider, then this is for you. In what must be quite a coup, there's even guest vocals from the current UK Prime Minister!

[8] ED CHAPMAN

# Now Available

## One Master 'Reclusive Blasphemy'

Occult black metal from the USA (12" and CD)

'They sound like the vicious, furious death of all that oppose their brand of raging and raw black metal' - *Cvltnation*



## Meads of Asphodel/Tjoltgtjar 'Taste the Divine Wrath' 12"

Split of bizarre BM from the UK and USA

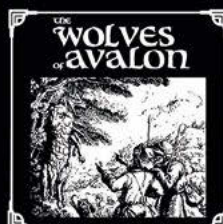
'what could be [one of] the most compelling splits of the decade' - *Invisible Oranges*



# Coming Soon

## Wolves of Avalon 'Die Hard' 7"

Project of Metatron from Meads, with guest appearances from Mantas (Venom), Rob Miller (Amebix), Mirai (Sigh), and AA (Primordial)



## Haxen 's/t' 12"

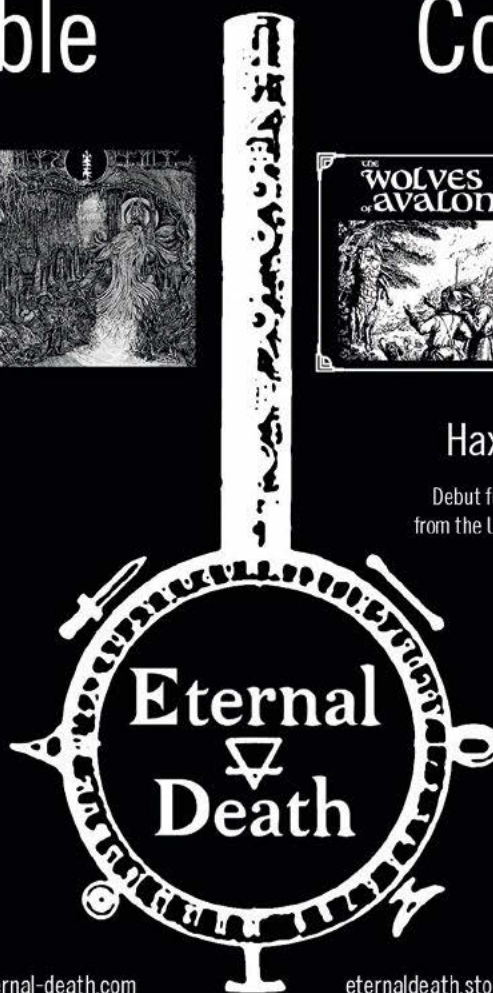
Debut full length of barbaric BM from the USA in the vein of Katharsis



## Bog of the Infidel 'Asleep in the Arms of Suicide' CD



New full length of Dissection influenced BM from the USA



[www.eternal-death.com](http://www.eternal-death.com)

[eternaldeath.storenvy.com](http://eternaldeath.storenvy.com)

## ADVERSARIAL TYRANNY



*Death, Endless Nothing, and the Black Knife of Nihilism*



*Aeons in Tectonic Interment*

Highly anticipated new full lengths from Canadian black/death metallers Adversarial and Finland's foremost funeral doom band Tyranny. Darkness, death, and cosmic horror on CD and LP from two of the underground's most acclaimed acts.



## BESIEGED

Two new songs from Winnipeg's heirs to the death/thrash throne of Sepultura and Slayer. On 7" from Unspeakable Axe.



## SADISTIC RITUAL

Atlanta's Sadistic Ritual make the ideal soundtrack for a thrash-slasher movie on this new CD EP.

[unspeakableaxerecords.com](http://unspeakableaxerecords.com)



[WWW.DARKDESCENTRECORDS.COM](http://WWW.DARKDESCENTRECORDS.COM)

[DARKDESCENTRECORDS.BANDCAMP.COM](http://DARKDESCENTRECORDS.BANDCAMP.COM)



# SELECTED AND DISSECTED

**"IT TRULY SHOWCASES THE BAND'S TURMOIL"**



## LAMB OF GOD 'VII: Sturm Und Drang'

NUCLEAR BLAST RECORDS

For many, 2012 seemed to mark the death of Lamb Of God following Randy Blythe's arrest in the Czech Republic, yet after three years of turmoil the Virginia five-piece have returned with a vengeance with 'VII: Sturm Und Drang', a record full of angst and fury indeed. From the first note of 'Still Echoes' to the adrenaline-fuelled 'Anthropoid', this is Lamb Of God at their very best.

For the majority of the record's duration Lamb Of God aren't breaking the mould, but by now fans know what to expect. Mark Morton's solos are incredibly solid, with 'Erase This' being a particular highlight. Despite Chris Adler's commitment to Megadeth's upcoming record, he still provides a pummelling rhythm from start to finish.

Yet it is Randy Blythe's vocal efforts that may turn a few heads. Whilst for the majority of the record, Blythe unleashes his signature growls and snarls, 'Overlord' is a welcome



change to the traditional Lamb Of God formula. With Randy Blythe including melodic vocals, it adds emotional depth to the record, something that has been somewhat absent from the band's back catalogue.

Guest appearances from Chino Moreno (Deftones) on 'Embers' and Greg Puciato (The Dillinger Escape Plan) on 'Torches' only continue to enforce Lamb Of God's expansion into uncharted territory. 'VII: Sturm Und Drang' is a solid release by one of modern metal's leaders and whilst the faithful may view these new musical voyages with caution, it truly showcases the band's turmoil from the past three years.

[8] JAMES WEAVER

## BEHIND BARS

SOME OF THIS ALBUM IS INFLUENCED BY RANDY'S TIME IN PRISON, JUST LIKE THESE CLASSIC SONGS

### JOHNNY CASH

#### 'FOLSOM PRISON BLUES' (1968)

The opening track from Cash's 'At Folsom Prison' live album, the crowd must have been able to relate to this one

### THIN LIZZY

#### 'JAILBREAK'

"Tonight there's gonna be a jailbreak/somewhere in this town" – well, at the jail, surely? Where else are you going to have a jailbreak? Still, top tune!

### PUBLIC ENEMY

#### 'BLACK STEEL IN THE HOUR OF CHAOS'

Chuck D's tale of a draft dodger attempting to break out of prison stills sounds just as incendiary as it ever did

### BUZURU

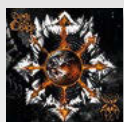
#### 'DAUBI BALDRS'

The title track from Varg's MIDI-tastic first prison album proves that jail time doesn't always result in, erm, timeless music

## DAWN OF CHAOS

### 'The Need To Feed'

UKEM



Maskerading technical shortcomings as the stuff of gritty, old school authenticity may have long been the norm for bands operating within such murky primitive levels of production, but rather than peddling sloppy retro fodder, the pinpoint accuracy and grave-scented pungency oozing from every bone-splintering riff is as awash with the scalding immediacy of the moment as it is steeped in early '90s tradition. Above a thickly distorted expanse of scabrous shredding, gristly lines of tremolo maintain ripping precision through the gargling throes of 'The Thrall Engine', while 'Abominatrix' manipulates notey progressions to mind-altering effect. While Dawn Of Chaos' staunchly traditional style allows limited space for innovative material, theirs is a nonetheless vile and visceral talent.

[7] FAYE COULMAN

## DESOLATE PATHWAY

### 'Valley Of The King'

SELF-RELEASED



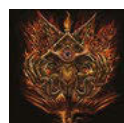
Desolate Pathway is a relatively new (and currently unsigned) London-based traditional doom/heavy metal quartet formed by former Pagan Altar guitarist, Vince Hempstead. 'Valley...' is their full-length debut. Hempstead enlisted vocalist Simon Stanton, bassist Jim Rumsey, and drummer Mags to bring this sweeping sword and sorcery fantasy to life. 'Valley...'s eight tracks relate the mythic tale of Prince Palidor, who embarks upon a perilous quest to regain his crown 'Upon The Throne Of Lights'. With the exception of a few brief "theatrical" voice segments 'Valley...' is lean and straight-forward; all else is superfluous. Desolate Pathway exhibits a rare honesty and plays to their strengths which are highlighted by Hempstead's soaring solos and Stanton's emotive, clean vocals.

[7] JOHN MINCEMOYER

## DEIPHAGO

### 'Into The Eye Of Satan'

HELL'S HEADBANGERS



Reveling in its imperviousness and intensity, war metal's complete inaccessibility regularly deters even the most seasoned of extreme metallers. However when a band offer up the sonic chaos that the genre demands while incorporating memorable structure, it all suddenly makes sense. Deiphago's fourth full-length 'Into The Eye Of Satan' achieves this, with the psychotically-arranged cacophony of drums and guitars working against each other to construct a sound that laughs maniacally in the face of being labeled 'savage'. Yet, amongst the carnage are captivating moments of songwriting that tie it all together; dissonant solos, unhinged drumming, and swivel-eyed honorifics toward Satan – Deiphago blend it all into a satisfying, terrifying storm.

[7.5] RICH TAYLOR

## DEW-SCENTED

### 'Intermination'

METAL BLADE



The subtle lashings of scalpel-fine technical detail and dusky atmospherics that punctuate this thoroughly crushing affair may escape less attentive ears. But between Dew-Scented's frenzied stints of lacerating fretwork and supersized groove, it's these strategically placed subtleties that bring electrifying momentum and intelligent structure to the German veterans' latest venture. Imploding out of a tense alignment of deathly acoustics and abrasive mechanical noise, 'Intermination's opening sucker-punch of muscular distortion instantly floods the senses with aggression before thorny clusters of reverb add gritty intensity to the mix. Whether in sun-scorched smatterings of Far Eastern phrasing or breathlessly suspenseful breaks, there's no small amount of ingenuity at work in this solidly entertaining full-length.

[7.5] FAYE COULMAN

## ALDA 'Passage'

BINDRUNE

"Cascadian black metal" might be a description far too overused since the ubiquitous (influence-wise) Wolves In The Throne Room first wowed us with their reinvention of black metal, especially as it references a particular region. Alda are not only from the Tahoma landscape, within the actual Cascade mountain range, but also the mixture of black metal and folk which flows unstoppably from 'Passage' exhales the same vigorous yet pastoral fascination we've come to expect from the best examples of this subgenre. Throughout the five ample songs, there is plenty of room to breathe in the air of nature, with soft acoustic passages and clean vocal harmonies evoking late nights by the fire, yet their seamless marriage with the fiercer parts – which rage more out of



melancholy and awe of ancient splendour than out of fury or anger itself – lends them a dark and quietly bleak atmosphere. In short, if Agalloch, WITTR or even old Ulver ever moved you, you need this.

[8] JOSÉ CARLOS SANTOS

## DREADNOUGHT

### 'Bridging Realms'

SAILOR



Labelling a band as "Prog" can often be a lazy catch-all, but in the case of Colorado's quirky quartet Dreadnought, it is a last resort. Kelly Schilling and Lauren Vieira are responsible for the rarity that is dual female vocals, which pave the path for their unclassifiable fusion of retro rock, black-ish metal and doomy folk, with an occasional sprinkle of jazz. The band's instrumentation is as unique as their music, including the rather unconventional trinity of flute, saxophone and mandolin, along with the more traditional foursome of guitar, keys and rhythm section. While this refreshingly bizarre blend works beautifully most of the time, their jack-of-all-trades approach leaves some sections diluted. A must-hear nonetheless.

[7] RAY HOLROYD

## EGONAUT

### 'Deluminati'

MIGHTY MUSIC



When you spin the third record from Swedes Egonaut, you can sort of see what they're getting at, even if they don't actually get there. They have all the elements in place for a great rock band: tight, inventive '70s style riffs, solid rhythm section, Hammond organ swirls and the songwriting discipline to tie it all together into some nice little tunes. So why does it all sound so damn pale? Perhaps because 'Deluminati' has a power metal-esque kitsch that'll grate on those who crave more grit that the likes of Spiritual Beggars provide, or maybe the flat production doesn't do them any favours. Maybe they'll find the sweet spot on album number four.

[5] STEVE JONES



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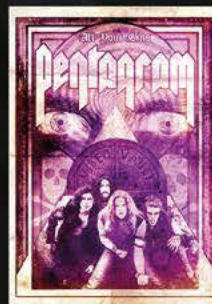
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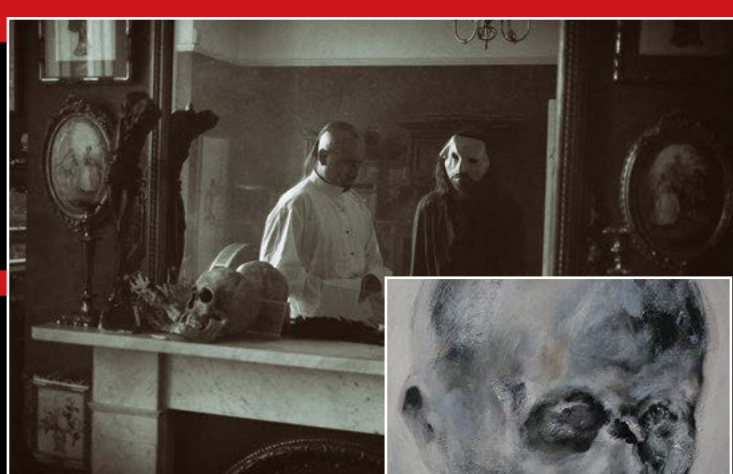
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# SELECTED AND DISSECTED

**"MOVING FROM ONE SCHIZOPHRENIC MASS OF MADNESS TO THE NEXT"**



## LYCHGATE

**'An Antidote For The Glass Pill'**  
BLOOD MUSIC

Doom-laden black metal and sinister classicism combine in a terrifying fashion here, bringing about a grand-guignol soundtrack of horror that knows no bounds. It's not surprising that Lychgate, with their second album, have expanded things in such a nerve shredding fashion considering they have members of Esoteric, Macabre Omen, Ancient Ascendant & The One amidst their ranks. Exploring arcane paths based narratively around Bentham's theoretical prison construction from the eighteenth century, the Panopticon, this is a heady, devilish treat in every sense. One of the main weapons utilised in making it so utterly demonic is the austere organ work of Kevin Boyer at its backbone, the overall effect reminiscent of both Bach and work done by Keith Emerson and Goblin on Michele Soavi's 'The Church'. It's a place where no light penetrates

even as the band put progressive parts and Solefald-esque vocals into its midst. Things never stand still for a second, moving from one schizophrenic mass of madness to the next with Greg Chandler's gibbering vocal parts accentuating things with possessed intent. The baroque blackness swarms with all-consuming tightness around battering surges of hefty drumming as ghostly voices ominously chant, and a grandfather clock strikes and attack the senses with a foulness that sounds like it is being performed in a towering deconsecrated cathedral. This really gets the imagination flowing and the atmosphere is palpable every hideous step of the way. 'An Antidote...' is a true magnum opus for those that are prepared to confront the horror at its bloody beating heart.

[8.5] PETE WOODS

## THE SUM OF THEIR PARTS

WHAT THE MEMBERS OF Lychgate DO WHEN THEY'RE NOT MAKING INTENSE, PROGRESSIVE BLACK METAL

### THE ONE

Lychgate head honcho Voltigern also drums for the furious filthy The One, razor sharp black metal in the vein of Inquisition

### ESOTERIC

Vocalist/guitarist Greg Chandler is most well known for his work with these funeral doom titans, whose contributions to the genre are pretty damn vast

### MACABRE OMEN

Percussionist Tom Vallyely provides drums for Macabre Omen too, epic, windswept black metal that's a must for fans of 'Hammerheart'-era Bathory

### OMEGA CENTAURI

Tom plays all the instruments in Omega Centauri, a more twisted, atmospheric affair for fans of Blut Aus Nord, Deathspell Omega etc.

## HATEBEAK

**'The Number Of The Beak'**

REPTILIAN



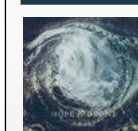
Hatebeak consisted of Pig Destroyer's Blake Harrison, Triac's Mark Sloan and an African grey parrot named Waldo on vocals. Yup, a parrot. Named Waldo. This new release compiles their three split releases alongside six new, previously unearthed tunes ('Birdzum', anyone? How about 'Molt Throver?'), but once the novelty of their feathered frontman wears off, is it actually worth a damn? Well, yes and no; the rudimentary death-grind on offer here is nothing special and the "death squawks" were never as entertaining as fellow beast-based grinders Caninus (fronted by two pit-bulls!), but there's still something bizarrely alluring (and hilarious) about hearing Waldo lose his shit over these distinctly home-made sounding recordings. Completely unessential, but if you've a taste for the absurd, go ahead!

[5] KEZ WHELAN

## HOPE DRONE

**'Cloak Of Ash'**

RELAPSE



Australia is home to some amazing extreme metal and the monolithic blackened storm that Brisbane's Hope Drone bring is an intense and hypnotic one. Found somewhere in the gaps between Wolves In The Throne Room and 'Souls At Zero'/'Enemy Of The Sun' Neurosis, they have honed their dark craft into an album of epic and sprawling cacophonies that soar and swirl into the dust choked atmosphere of a post apocalyptic ruined cityscape. This isn't forests and ancient inspired black metal, this is dystopian city living blackness; the album starts with a twenty minute colossus going by the title 'Unending Grey', a fitting barrage of blasts/screams/calm/atmospherics that fit the modern day city life.

[8] ALEX BONIWELL

## EVIL ACIDHEAD

**'In The Name Of All That Is Unholy'**

AGITATED



There are tiny corners of the world where the sounds collected here enjoy a cultish reputation, but as they emerged in 1990 as extremely scarce cassettes, chances are they're plumb new to you. Evil Acidhead, a duo of John McBain and Greg Chapman, evoke no particular era during these 77 minutes of massively fucked guitar-and-electronics psychedelic noise, in which phaser FX, wah-wah and ultra-primitive techno loops abound. Christ knows what their influences might have been, but Japan's Keiji Haino and England's Skullflower could be considered loosely kindred spirits. McBain, additionally, was a member of Monster Magnet at the time, but next to Evil Acidhead, early Magnet records like 'Spine Of God' sound like, well, later Magnet records.

[7] NOEL GARDNER

## FIGHT AMP

**'Constantly Off'**

BRUTAL PANDA



Finding a way to be annoying or difficult is a noble tradition of the American noisierock band, and this Philadelphia trio manage it by being apparently incapable of deciding if they're called Fight Amp or Fight Amputation. That said, in other respects – specifically their music – they're fairly accessible. 'Constantly Off', a six-song mini-album, is produced with an exacting, bottom-heavy crunch, but its riffs and arrangements are linear and broadly melodic. 'Ex Everything', the record's opener, pummels in the expansive manner of Torche; 'Happy Joyful Life', its closer, is like the Melvins doing gothic post-punk. In between, things go sludge and pop in effervescent ways which fans of anyone from McLusky to Nirvana might warm to.

[6.5] NOEL GARDNER

## FEAR FACTORY

**'Genexus'**

NUCLEAR BLAST



The man-machine is grinding back into life. Twenty years on from their defining work – the revolutionary 'Demanufacture' – Burton C. Bell and Dino Cazares remain at the helm of Fear Factory, with ninth album 'Genexus' looming. While the blueprint's been tweaked along the way, this record adheres closely to the core of their sound; from mechanised, sheet-metal riffs to Bell's drill-sergeant bark, topped by those soaring choruses. They weave another tale of technological advance and transhumanism, dovetailing with the release of a new Terminator movie – peaking on the crushing grooves of 'Regenerate' and 'Autonomous Combat System'. Familiarity blunts the edge, and closing cyber-ballad 'Expiration Date' won't be to everyone's taste, but they're far from a spent force.

[7] ROB SAYCE

## GUS G.

**'Brand New Revolution'**

CENTURY MEDIA



Featuring a roll call that'd soak the crotch of anyone still hanging on the Sunset Strip, the Ozzy/Firewind firebrand returns with his second solo record. The various vocal guests (Mats Levén, Jeff Scott Soto, Elize Ryd, etc.) contribute to some inconsistency, but what doesn't is how Gus G. flings from shredding guitar hero to cock rocker with the flick of a wrist. 'Brand New Revolution' smoulders more darkly than 'I Am The Fire', but the majority of its well-constructed standards reek of knocking boots and shaking manes instead of tearing down walls and subverting the system. And all of it is about guitar, guitar and more fucking gee-tar! Solos! Artificial harmonic pinches! Melodies! Solos! And more solos.

[6] KEVIN STEWART-PANKO

## INDESINENCE

**'III'**

PROFOUND LORE

Comprising 70-odd minutes of tombstone-heavy death-doom, Indesinence's imaginatively titled third full-length is not a 'quick fix' kind of record. Occupying roughly the same sonic headspace as Esoteric (whose Greg Chandler handles mixing duties), the London-based trio take the crushing, forlorn tones of early My Dying Bride and imbue them with a swirling and expansive psychedelic edge. Soaring guitar leads and subtle synth textures bring a sense of celestial grandeur to numbers like 'Nostalgia', but these chinks of light are offset by vocalist/guitarist Iliá Rodríguez's guttural invocations and hulking lead-weight riffs, in addition to the frequent excursions into faster, double bass-propelled death metal territory. The band's individualistic approach is reflected in their unusual choice of cover version, with their booming rendition of 'Five Years Ahead Of My Time'



(originally by short-lived 1960s psych rockers The Third Bardo) providing a brief pick-me-up ahead of the sprawling seventeen minute 'Strange Meridian'. Highly recommended if you like your metal to keep you guessing while simultaneously caving your head in.

[7.5] MIKE KEMP



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### NOCTURNAL DEPRESSION

*'Spleen Black Metal'*  
Hard-cover digibook CD

New album by DSBM french pioneers showing an additional development since their previous record and presenting two innovations: a richest and refined production as well as the inclusion of string instruments that emerge in some key points. Lyrically the album is based on the poems of a selected elite of French poets: Baudelaire, Cros, Laforgue, Brusset, Lamartine, elevating in this way the contents and target of this album to the top.



### THE DEATHTRIP

*'A foot in each Hell'*  
Digi CD

This is The Deathtrip's demo collection plus exclusive tracks, as previously released on vinyl by Demonhood Productions, but finally available on cd as well and coming in a six panels digipack. The Deathtrip is an eerie, 90's feel, black metal project enshroud around the souls of Host and Dodheimsgard's fame vocalist Aldrahn.



### HARROW

*'Fallow Fields'*  
Digi CD

"Fallow Fields" is the triumphant follow up to Canadian artist Harrow's 2013 offering, "Fragments of a Fallen Star". An intoxicating blend of black and folk metal, an organic progression of emotional atmospheres, at times wistful, anguished, or anthemic, meanders along a path of airy acoustic melodies intersected by blast beats and sustained by drones that carry and unite each section.



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## INTENSIVE SQUARE 'Anything That Moves'

BLACK BOW



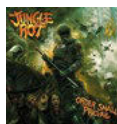
With a sound that draws influence from the likes of Crowbar, Pantera and Meshuggah, Intensive Square's debut

is jam-packed with riffs, growls and tales of apocalyptic horrors. From start to finish the record smashes the listener in the face with raw power – opener 'The Long Man' sets the tone in grand fashion, with a frantic beat and beastly roars from Chris Haughton. Closer 'King' screams doom influence with riffs that ooze sludge, which alters the pace slightly, but it adds an extra level of depth to Intensive Square's sound. 'Anything That Moves' is a stellar debut from the Welsh five-piece and drives their focused sound in serious momentum.

[7] JAMES WEAVER

## JUNGLE ROT 'Order Shall Prevail'

VICTORY



Here's a phrase you don't hear every day: ever since signing to Victory, Jungle Rot have experienced a revival. Some of their strongest

material has appeared on 'Kill On Command' and 'Terror Regime' and when we've seen them live in the last couple of years, they've consistently brought it, hard. 'Order Shall Prevail' won't win awards with originality committees or lovers of fine art, wine and cheese, but for those who salivate for meat and potatoes death metal, the Kenosha bruisers' eighth album should provide hearty sustenance. All the hallmarks and signets are present, accounted for and wrangled into death-riddled, vein-pulsing nods to furious thrash (title track), fiery punk ('Blood Revenge') and the sound of faces sinking concrete ('Doomsday').

[7] KEVIN STEWART-PANKO

## JASON W. WALTON 'Mara'

RED ORCHARD



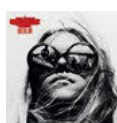
Conceived under great personal duress, 'Mara' sees Agalloch bassist Jason traversing the realms of

disturbing electronica. The fact that Walton lost both his stepfather and a close friend after each track was recorded, only adds to the feeling of loss which exists throughout this release. Tanner Anderson's terrifyingly anguished vocal on 'Yakeshi' conveys the horrifying isolation that Walton experienced during his experiments with sleep paralysis by which he connects with lost loved ones. This seven inch conjures a feel of absolute despair via the medium of manipulating sounds of crowd noise and the ocean into bizarre morose soundscapes. Excruciatingly poignant, 'Mara' provides a horrifyingly vivid glimpse into the blackest untapped recesses of the human psyche.

[7] ROSS BAKER

## KADAVAR 'Berlin'

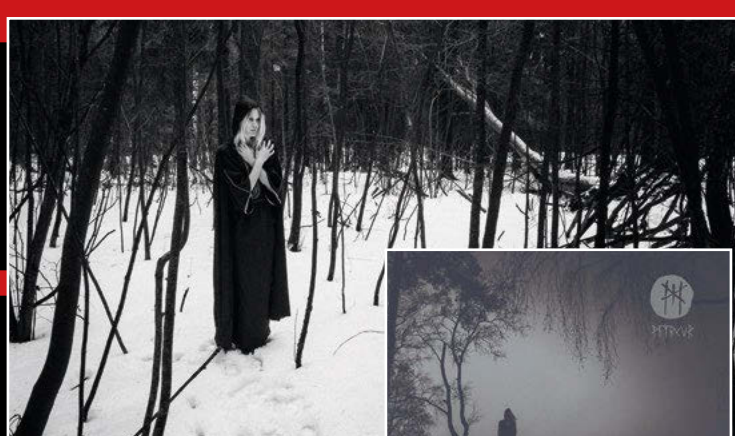
NUCLEAR BLAST



These German classic rock revivalists draw upon influences such as Cream, Pentagram, Sabbath and Blue Cheer to create a

muscular, bluesy '70s vibe. Not as doomy as Orchid, nor as catchy as Witchcraft, Kadavar are richer and more soulful than their Nuclear Blast label-mates. Despite their undoubted songwriting expertise and the support of a sizeable marketing division (there are multiple artwork options to hurl your money at), the album contains too many formulaic moments to stand out from the retro crowd. Opener 'Lord Of The Sky' is depressingly obvious, while 'See The World With Your Own Eyes' offers meek soft rock. 'Berlin' is a well-crafted album with moments of diversity, but it doesn't get pulses racing.

[6] STEVE BIDMEAD



## MYRKUR 'M'

RELAPE

While Myrkur's veil of anonymity has fallen somewhat since the emergence of last year's self-titled EP, the musical substance of her debut full-length 'M' proves a vindication of the buzz that blossomed from Myrkur's mystery and unorthodox presence. Through building on the central characteristics of the sound displayed on the aforementioned EP – mystical, soaring choral vocals juxtaposed against harshly melodious riffery and ethereal, folk-imbued 'Bergtatt'-isms – 'M' sees Myrkur more skillfully exploring her influences and integrating them into a stronger expression of beauty, power and melancholy.

Beginning with the angelic yet haunting choral vocals that capture both Myrkur's aesthetic and sound, 'M' is immediately revealed to be a more refined release than the EP, with opening track 'Skogen Skulle Dø' skillfully incorporating redolent folk melodies and instrumentation alongside the sleepily romantic sound of early Ulver. It isn't all tranquil forest-dwelling ambience however, with 'M' nestling second-wave inspired ferocity alongside the serenity, and delivering the unconventional

riffery with an intriguingly unbridled dissonance that benefits greatly from a far more organic (and realistic) percussive backing than that of prior releases. Myrkur's more intense moments also reveal another striking element in the band's development, with her increasingly distorted and demented screams layered over the moments of chaotic composition to produce a sound very much divorced from typical solo-black metal projects.

Moving towards a climactic, affecting finale of skillfully composed classical atmosphere, 'M' demonstrates that Myrkur possesses an emotional power and substance that more than quashes the squawking of online naysayers. Replete with evocative melodies, soaring emotion and ravaging aggression, the record represents another resounding step on this artist's clandestine and cathartic journey.

[8] RICH TAYLOR

## DEFENDER OF THE FAITH

MYRKUR ON DIFFERENT COUNTRIES' ATTITUDES TO METAL

"When I go to Norway I'm always surprised by the level of acceptance and even celebration of metal as a music genre, whereas in Denmark there's a stone age outlook upon metal. It's a completely different world from what the usual Danish person is subjected to, it's

very stuck in that old, boring version of what metal is, or what other people think metal is. Some people might be mad at me for trying to turn metal into a popular culture – not pop culture, mind you – thing, but I'm just simply happy and proud if I can help do that. Not just my music, but metal in general needs to be heard more and respected more."

## KATAKLYSM 'Of Ghosts And Gods'

NUCLEAR BLAST

Stirring in every battering blast, sinewy groove and exhilarating flourish displayed here is an instantly recognisable presence that's been diligently honed over the course of twelve studio albums. From the pummelling, militaristic fury of 2002's 'Shadows And Dust' to the molten melodic euphoria of more recent full-lengths, fresh offering 'Of Ghosts And Gods' is richly steeped in the Canadians' prized, percussive trademarks. Yet in the same frantically energised breath is the unmistakable sound of a band constantly in motion, with the insanely paced strains of 'Vindication' forming a particularly brutal testament to Kataklysm's relentlessly evolving audio. 'Marching Through Graveyards' blackened trappings abound with bloodcurdling horrors, while 'The World Is A Dying Insect' toys intelligently with



hauntingly introspective atmospheres. These slow-burning complexities demand more than a casual listen to fully digest, but from subtle atmospheric to scalding ultra-violence, Kataklysm's killer instincts are yet again impressively on point.

[8] FAYE COULMAN

## KHOST 'Corrosive Shroud'

COLD SPRING



Not in a bad way, but 'Corrosive Shroud's' 55 minutes feel like five hours to wade through. Such is the thick density and the constant, overwhelming bleakness of the sound wall produced by this Birmingham duo, that halfway through the terrifying third song, 'Black Rope Hell', you'll longingly look at the tracklist to see how much you'll still have to endure of this hell. At times darkly tribal, at times purely a punishingly black/industrial sort of more full-on Godflesh, it always rescues itself from the brink at the last possible moment before the relief of pressing stop, with slight moments of shoegazing beauty to allow for a brief breather before entering the morass once more.

[8] JOSÉ CARLOS SANTOS

## KRISIUN 'Forged In Fury'

CENTURY MEDIA



Landing a full twenty years after Krišun's debut, 'Forged In Fury' stands as an exercise in displaying the durability (if predictability) of the three-headed juggernaut's sound. With the album Krišun display their familiar power-trio assault of rampant, double bass-centric drumming, deeply rumbling basslines and interplay between squealing Morbid Angel-esque solos and stripped back chuggery. Yet while the Brazilian brothers deliver this formula with the brutality that has ensured their longevity, 'Forged In Fury' lacks the engaging songwriting extremity that they displayed on 'Southern Storm' or 'The Great Execution'. The tracks here will no doubt get heads banging and pits churning live, but when the urge to spin a Krišun record rises up, 'Forged In Fury' may not top the list.

[6] RICH TAYLOR

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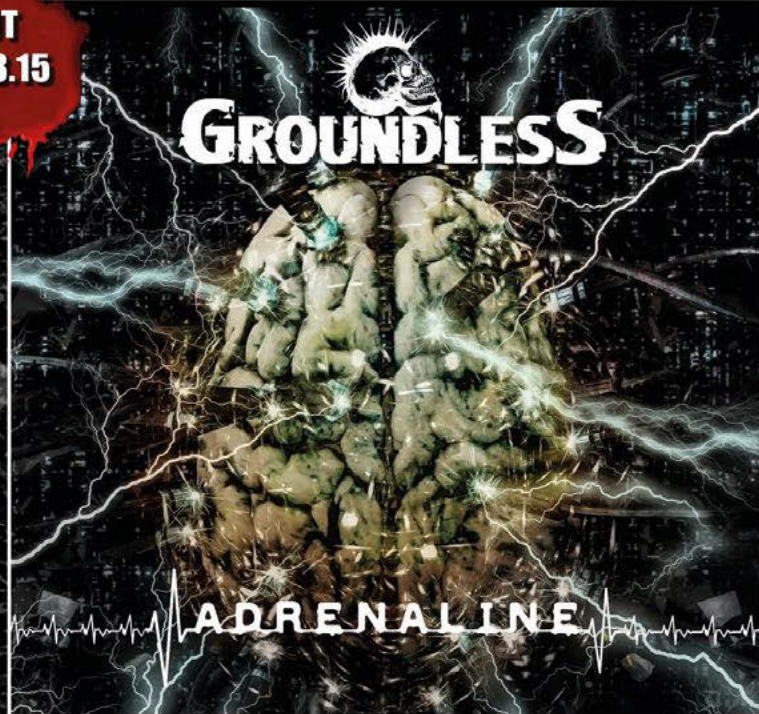
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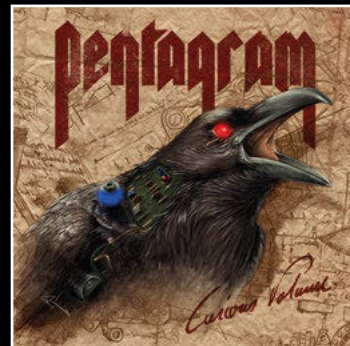
## PENTAGRAM

'Curious Volume'

PEACEVILLE

**P**entagram is a name that should send a shudder through the soul of every decent music fan, and rightly so. For through all the personal turmoil since the 1970s, it's all gone straight into their buzzing proto-doom metal, transforming the contemporary rock of the time into something darker, meaner and more melancholic. Fast forward to 2015, and once again masterminds Bobby Liebling and Victor Griffin have reunited for another record, which can only be a good thing. For even when Bobby was in the depths of crack addiction and other such drug craziness, the vocalist has still been one of the most astute songwriters, one who will channel all his demons into his art. Whatever else, his has worn his art on his paisley sleeves throughout the years.

As soon as the first track hits, you can tell that this is one of the true doom dream twins, and they're back on ripping form on 'Curious Volume' – Bobby is far from being the shambling wreck he was portrayed as in the



opening minutes of the 'Last Days Here' documentary. Alongside his astute, passionate lyrics he's back with his partner in crime guitarist Victor, and together they made the very classic Pentagram records. This might not be up there as sometimes they lose focus – like on the surf rocking 'Misunderstood' – from their own doom template. But they wrote that template, and when they open a record with a song as defiant and clear as 'Lay Down And Die' you know you've got another immense Pentagram record on your hands.

STEVE JONES

## BE FOREWARNED

GUITARIST VICTOR GRIFFIN ON 'CURIOUS VOLUME'

**"T**he songs are cool, it's still the Pentagram sound, heavy and all that. Some of it leans a little bit more into a hard rock direction, which I think is cool. It sort of opens us up more to different ideas and things like that. People always call Pentagram a doom band, and when I go back and

listen to the songs we've done, the doom metal element is definitely there, but it's always kind of split between that edge of doom and hard rock. I think the album will fit in right where progress has taken us up to this point. People should dig it, old and new fans alike."

## MAKE

'The Golden Veil'

SELF-RELEASED



**J**ust as their moniker gives nothing away, MAKE's music can be difficult to pin down. That's not to say the North Carolinian three-piece are without peers – listening to their second full-length, one can definitely hear hints of Isis, Envy, Minsk and Horseback to name a few – but there's a whole lot more going on within their expansive compositions than the standard post-metal formula of simmering build-up and cathartic release. Instead numbers like 'Breathe', 'The Absurdist' and 'The Architect' exist in a state of constant ebb and flow, at times sounding soaring and triumphant, at others hopelessly dejected, with sparingly used vocals ranging from meditative chants to full-bodied guttural howls. Perfect if you want a record to completely lose yourself in.

[8] MIKE KEMP

## META-STASIS

'The Paradox Of Metanoia'

SELF-RELEASE



**M**ental, yes! In-stasis, definitely not. The old and new ways of metal meld headlong in a melting-pot of an album by this UK based mob of noiseniks. Rugged grooves, industrial, electronic elements and everything from drum and bass to technical death bombast combine, working together to forge some craftily constructed tunes that really keep the listener on their toes. Like a bastardised mash-up of Slipknot and The Defiled going ten rounds with Morbid Angel and Immolation, they keep things real and hit from all angles at the same time. Vocals are just as versatile going from immense deathly growls to rapped out diatribes and clean harmonic swoops, making the dizzying, deranged nature of this beast impossible to ignore.

[7] PETE WOODS

## MEFITIC

'Woes Of Mortal Devotion'

NUCLEAR WAR NOW!



**F**ans of Grave Miasma and their ilk will know the drill. Mefitic revel in that murky, chaotic death metal sound which has gained popularity over the few years. Luckily for Mefitic, they stand out in a genre which is feeling increasingly saturated. The production is clear enough that you can actually hear the riffs, as well as the warm bass tone. The drums are absolutely thunderous, and the songs themselves hit hard as well. 'Eroding The Oblates Of The Lord 2' is a particularly good example of how adept the band are with fast/slow dynamics. Mefitic might not be doing anything new, but 'Woes Of Mortal Devotion' is still a tight and engaging listen.

[8] TOM SAUNDERS

## MUTOID MAN

'Bleeder'

SARGENT HOUSE



**I**t's entirely unsurprising that this debut album from the ingenious collective of Steve Brodsky (Cave In guitarist), Ben Koller (Converge drummer) and Nick Cageao (bassist) is truly extraordinary. Following on from their debut EP 'Helium Head' (2013), 'Bleeder' unarguably proves the trio's importance and independence from their day-job bands. Kurt Ballou at God City Studios has excelled at capturing their ferocious live sound and energy in 29 minutes of turbocharged sonic steamrolling which tours through a variety of heavy subgenres, with savage yet sophisticated detuned riffage and tough yet tasty vocal hooks as your guides. For the sake of music, may these motivated men find the time to keep Mutoid Man from burning out.

[8] RAY HOLROYD

## LOCRIAN

'Infinite Dissolution'

RELAPSE

**I**t's not really a question of reinvention. If we analyse 'Infinite Dissolution' coldly, we'll come up with similar descriptions to the ones already used on Locrian's many discography entries (until 2009 they were impossibly prolific in terms of small releases, having settled on full-lengths roughly every two years ever since) – black metal, drone, electronics and ambient will all fit, with the "post" prefix also able to be used interchangeably between all those. Yet, the approach to 'Infinite Dissolution' makes it a wildly different, much harsher effort than all the previous ones. The subject matter – the extinction of man – is harrowing enough to warrant the vitriol in the duo's attack. Though moments of serenity exist, they are born of deep sadness, like on 'Dark Shales', and ready to turn on you as a beast not knowing any masters anymore. A sort of



mix between Pyramids and Horseback gone all apocalyptic, 'Infinite Dissolution' is a gripping, yet frightening listen like few others we've heard recently.

[8.5] JOSÉ CARLOS SANTOS

## MY SILENT WAKE

'Damnatio Memoriae'

HOUSE OF ASHES



**I**t's always enjoyable to discover a doom band prepared to work their fretboards, and with their eighth full-length 'Damnatio Memoriae', My Silent Wake may be about to provide that. Plying the misery-drenched sound of 'Gothic'-era Paradise Lost, 'Damnatio Memoriae' delivers on all the right early-'90s death/doom fronts: dynamic riffery, a punchy, locked-in rhythm section and an engaging, impassioned performance courtesy of vocalist Ian Arkley. Sure, some of the album occasionally veers into predictable territory, but with the more strikingly sorrowful melodies of 'And So It Comes To An End' and the death-tinted melancholy of 'The Empty Unkown' adding memorable vitality and atmosphere, 'Damnatio Memoriae' proves a gloomily worthwhile listen.

[6.5] RICH TAYLOR

## NUCLEAR

'Formula For Anarchy'

CANDLELIGHT



**S**ome have commented that it's almost embarrassing how much Chile's Nuclear are trying to sound like Slayer, but the counter-argument is that Slayer have been embarrassing themselves trying to sound like Slayer for years now – plus Nuclear's new album sounds so much heavier and more intense than anything Slayer have put their name on recently, if you're a fan of Slayer because you love how they sound, it would be churlish to ignore Nuclear because they aren't the most original metal band out there. What they are, however, is frantically fast and savagely tight with insanely brutal vocals and manic leads, so if you like urgent thrash metal – done right – this is pretty much essential listening.

[7.5] IAN GLASPER

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### UNDERSMILE

The mood which dominates Anhedonia is one of unarguably devastating gloom, forming a psychodrama which slowly drags the listener into its dementedly alluring labyrinth.

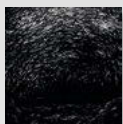
- Olly Thomas / KERRANG



# LAND OF ICE AND SNOW ICELANDIC BLACK METAL ROUNDUP

## OMMADON 'Empathy For The Wicked'

GOLDEN MANTRA



Both members of Ommadon were previously in Snowblood, a Scottish band who combined a millennial style of doom with expansive post-rock and DIY hardcore ethics; but for the latter element, they could have become much bigger than they did. The strain of sludge heaviness they've explored in their subsequent duo – previously showcased on self-released CDRs and a double LP, 2014's 'V' – is rawer, arguably more uncompromising, but equally as emotionally powerful. An epic 46-minute trudge broken in two for vinyl, there are no vocals, just beds of amp-fuzz static and rumbling, droning riffs rolling into each other like a sea of SARS-spiked syrup. Corrupted and Burning Witch are the teachers, you suspect, but Ommadon excel as pupils.

[7.5] NOEL GARDNER

## PROPHETS OF SATURN 'Retronauts'

HEVISIKE

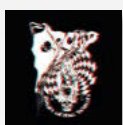


These fuzzed-up doom acolytes pump out big, spacey riffs with admirable gusto on their second album. Featuring dense, immense guitars and effects-soaked, psychedelic vocals, 'Retronauts' is a solid follow-up to the UK band's 2013 self-titled debut. Not so much a bad acid trip, more a case of déjà vu, this four-track album is unashamedly backwards-looking, calling upon the mighty power of Saint Vitus as well as the vintage vibes of Cream. Driven by homage rather than inspiration, 'Retronauts' makes up for its predictability with energy and doomed fun. From the simple stoner rock of 'Witch Rider' to the lively groove of standout track 'Ultra Wizards', Prophets Of Saturn blast a bong-shaped dent in your day.

[6.5] STEVE BIDMEAD

## ORCHID 'Sign Of The Witch'

NUCLEAR BLAST



Since formation in 2007, San Fran's Orchid have garnered no small won praise for their mix of Black Sabbath inspired riffery and occult visions. 'Sign Of The Witch' is a solid romp down a well trod '70s era path, with the title track being a bluesy rock 'n' roll feast for the ears. 'Strange Winds' brings an altogether different feel, very reminiscent of a certain journey everyone has made to the world of winnebagos... right? However, Orchid certainly know what they are doing (when a solo kicks in, your balls/flaps will melt off) and bring a lot of heart with their awesome riffs; it's almost as if Sabbath kept on making tracks as they should have done.

[8] IAN WILLIAMS

## PUBLICIST UK 'Forgive Yourself'

RELAPSE



Publicist UK are a post-punk band made up of members of bands including Revocation and Municipal Waste. Whilst not as catchy as Grave Pleasures (formerly Beastmilk), they blend the influences of Joy Division, Fields Of The Nephilim and Killing Joke with decent results. Whilst there's not much to complain about, there's not much originality here either, save for 'Canary' which has something approaching a metal breakdown on it. Unlike Grave Pleasures, the songs just aren't catchy enough to make the lack of originality here excusable. It's not a bad album by any means, it just feels uninspired. There's nothing new here for fans of the genre, and recent converts are better off getting to know the classics.

[5] TOM SAUNDERS

## PISSGRAVE 'Suicide Euphoria'

PROFOUND LORE



Even ignoring its grisly cover photo, which appears to depict human remains bobbing about in some kind of unappetising brown slurry, Pissgrave's debut is really, really fucking nasty. Taking early Floridian death metal as their jump-off point, the Philadelphia trio proceed to crank up the intensity to near-psychotic levels, with inhuman vocals, chaotic solos and a harsh, blown-out production evoking the bestial savagery of Revenge and their ilk. To many listeners, cuts like 'Perpetual War', 'Impaled Vibration' and 'Prevail In Hell' will undoubtedly seem like impenetrable noise. But for those with a predilection towards such things, 'Suicide Euphoria' serves as a timely reminder that, when done right, extreme metal can still sound absolutely horrifying.

[7] MIKE KEMP

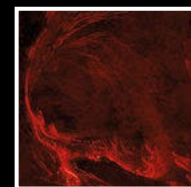
## PUTRIDITY 'Ignominious Atonement'

WILLOWTIP



Like many other "br00tal" death metal albums, in the case of these Italians' third abomination it's more about how the whole thing kind of flows without a hitch and less about coming with proper songs or even a single gram of originality. Yet even if they're not as mind-boggling in terms of drum patterns, Putridity fight in the same category as Defeated Sanity, a whirlwind where technicality is at the service of the utmost brutality and not the other way around. For a brief yet striking moment, things take a slower yet even more vicious bend on 'Mortifying Carnality' but everywhere else, this is one of the purest, and most effective, celebrations of what death metal is at its most vile. Question is: can you take it?

[7.5] OLIVIER 'ZOLTAR' BADIN



There is a new darkness rising, somewhere far, far in the north... In the inhospitable, barren wastelands of Iceland, where the ice and snow never melt off the caps of mountains even in the peak of summer, and even in cute little apartments in Reykjavik too, for that matter, black metal is suffering a transformation that might radically alter its face forever. We have been forewarned! The Úlfsmessa – i.e., the "Wolf's Mass" – for instance, has been taking place at the popular Eistnaflug festival for two years now and those of us who have been present are still trying to warm their bones from the Satanic chill emanated from that gathering of bands towards one common ritual. Both the bands that participate in that terrifying event and a few others form a particularly tight-knit scene, one which congregates around the Vánagandr tape label. This mysterious entity, which may or may not contain members of a few of the important bands on its roster, has a veritable onslaught of bleak horror to unleash upon us, all of it in the kvitst format of all, the unhallowed tape. To start things off, or rather, to end everything before it even begins, release number zero (seriously, its catalogue number is V-00) is the 'Null & Void' [8] album by faceless entity O. Apparently a five-piece, throughout 32 minutes they offer a desperate, hopeless dirge situated somewhere between frost-covered heavy doom and depressive black metal complete with longing screams of the abandoned. It will make you lose the will to live, but if you manage to hang on just a little further, Misþyrming will make you regain that will – even if it's only to live until you can see the world engulfed in a ball of black flame, which is what the nine songs of 'Söngvar Elds Og Óreiðu' [9], catalogue number V-01, will inspire you to long for. Relentless, chaotic black metal with a vocalist that looks like Cerberus itself being flayed alive, it brings to mind as much Deathspell Omega and Darkspace as it does the bleakness of Negative Plane. While these two initial releases are still the main highlights of the label, you should jump straight to the just-released V-06, a compilation simply titled 'Vánagandr' [8.5] featuring a track each by Naðra, Misþyrming, Sinmara, the widely known Svartíðauði, O and the creepily ritualistic NYÍP. It's the best introduction to this untamed new world, and it will further prepare you to the label's forthcoming release that we've been able to get our grubby paws on – the repressing of Úhrak's first demo, 'Kvikindi' [8], a foggy, mostly mid-paced journey through the grimmest sublevels of black metal. That's right, four different releases and nothing below the 8 rating. It's unusual and it warrants inspection by anyone with even a smattering of interest in quality black metal. As if to prove that Iceland really is the shit when it comes to the

genre right now, we've still got one outsider tape, not released by Vánagandr but by Nebular Winter, of the equally awesome Icelandic troupe known as Auðn. The CD version of their debut album 'Auðn' [8] was released last year, but you'd do well to get one of the 200 tapes if you still can, it's the best medium to really amplify the icy, Drudkh-meets-old-Immortal epic passages the band is able to create, particularly on the final, heart-stopping song also called 'Auðn'. Whatever drugs they're giving to black metal kids in Iceland, we want a bucketload of them in every other country, right now.

WORDS: JOSÉ CARLOS SANTOS

## RUSTY PACEMAKER 'Ruins'

SOLANUM



Oppressive and melancholy, this sophomore release from Austrian musician Rusty Hessel mines the mournful atmospherics of Katatonia, albeit a poor man's version due to one factor; the vocals. His heavily accented voice lacks power and frequently sounds flat. It's a great shame, as instrumentally at least, Rusty has some extremely promising ideas. 'Candlemass' possesses a wonderfully solemn guitar tone and the drums sound big but the lack of vocal presence is what is holding Hessel back from achieving greater notoriety. Lazy rhyming couplets and the use of whistling on the title track are twee and irritating. Rusty would do well to find himself a more accomplished vocalist, who would breathe life into these frustratingly stunted compositions.

[4] ROSS BAKER

## SILENMARA 'Methods'

SELF-RELEASED



It's absurd just how little differentiates a metalcore album and a melodic death metal album, and when you hear a band that has a clear understanding of the former and couldn't care less of the latter, it comes as a nice surprise. Miami band Silenmara stay focused on the Gothenburg influence, namely Soilwork, on its second album, but what's most intriguing here is just how vocal the band's reliance on cleanly sung vocals drags the record down. Reggie Miller's flat singing just isn't up to snuff, quickly becoming an annoyance. When that death growl is on, however, the music can be potent. It's a mighty roar, but when things get introspective, it becomes a weak whimper.

[5] ADRIEN BEGRAND

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## SOULFLY 'Archangel'

NUCLEAR BLAST



**"G**o hard, or go home! Go hard, or fuck off!" That's Max Cavallera in a nutshell. Never one to mince words, his lyrics walk that fine line between profoundly succinct and just plain dunderheaded. He's a master of overstating the obvious, but there's a charm in his caveman philosophizing too. Soulfly has been on autopilot as of late, but Cavallera and right-hand man Mark Rizzo churn out some inspired riffs on this tenth album that add a darker edge, which in turn make those rage-filled lyrics remarkably effective. When you find yourself nodding your head in approval to a track as silly as 'We Sold Our Souls To Metal', you know Soulfly's back on track.

[7] ADRIEN BEGRAND

## TENGER CAVALRY 'Blood Sacrifice Shaman'

METAL HELL



**T**his re-recording from the beasts from the East sees an early album given a bit of spit and polish. There's an odd beauty to how readily the mournful mysteriousness of a traditional Mongolian sound affixes itself to our music, but while folk metal often sees the odd novelty fiddle or accordion propping up straightforward riffage, heavy music is something of an afterthought here. 'The Native' has nary a whiff of electric guitars, and vocals consist almost exclusively – delectably – of throat singing, with the finest erhu rockin' this side of Chthonic. It won't revolutionise metal – it's only dipping a toe in it at times – but it's a stirring display of East meets West.

[6] ANDY MCDONALD

## SPECTRAL WOUND 'Terra Nullius'

SELF-RELEASE



**E**ver wonder what happened to Montreal's Ensorcelor? After an extremely promising debut album and a split with Moloch, the Canadian blackened sludge mob seemed to disappear without a trace. Well, until now, of course, as vocalist Jonah and guitarist Mike Kirkenbrannssar have returned with Spectral Wound and a heavy emphasis on that "blackened" aspect. There's not even a hint of their previous band's doomy sound here, as songs like 'The Hammer And The Flute' and opener 'Under A Purple Moon' explode in flurries of icy, early '90s style black metal, like a punkier version of early Emperor with a much thicker production. 'Terra Nullius' doesn't bring anything new to the table, but like Ninkharsag's recent debut, it's a confident and supremely enjoyable take on that classic black metal sound.

[7] KEZ WHELAN

## TERMINAL CHEESECAKE 'Cheese Brain Fondue: Live In Marseille'

ARTIFICIAL HEAD



**E**asily finding themselves in the upper echelons of any list of under-rated bands from the past thirty years, TC had an uncanny ability to continually make some of the most drugged-up, fucked-up music around, taking the depth and space of dub and filling it with sheet guitar noise, hallucinogenic rhythms and insane lyrical slants to match. Now returned with an expanded line-up with members old and new, the live set captured here trawls the old, the less-old and the brand new in fine brain-melting, fuzzed-up form. Back when, Terminal Cheesecake were one of the very few bands capable of making a seventy-minute gig feel like a ten minute intoxicating nightmare and, on this showing, they can still do so with ease.

[7] GUY STRACHAN

## SYMPHONY X 'Underworld'

NUCLEAR BLAST



**A**fter a lengthy spell dabbling in other projects – and sadly, in drummer Jason Rullo's case, convalescing – the American power-prog sorts deliver their ninth. Guitar fans will go a bundle on Michael Romeo's latest collection of serpentine grooves and runaway licks, and while the axeman's chops aren't in question, it's the moments in between the fretboard masturbation that brings the album into its own. The theatrical thunderstorm of 'Kiss Of Fire' sounds like the end of the world and 'Without You' strips things back into feel-good, melodic hard rock moments. While the momentum isn't entirely consistent – those aforementioned moments at times fall from endearingly bittersweet into lumpy – it's a fun ride nonetheless.

[7] ANDY MCDONALD

## TERROR 'The 25th Hour'

CENTURY MEDIA



**A**lbum number seven sees business remain much as usual for hardcore stalwarts Terror. There's perhaps slightly more of a thrash metal influence than on some other albums, and the songs are even faster and briefer than ever – the album's only 23 minutes – but for the most part, Terror stick to what they know best, because they do it so well. You want a bloke yelling angrily about getting stabbed in the back, you want gang vocals echoing all the key phrases (KEY PHRASES!), you want beatdowns and chugging riffs – you got 'em. "I tried to change/I'm exactly the same," Scott Vogel yells on 'Bad Signs', and that's about as self-reflexive as Terror ever get. Good.

[7] ED CHAPMAN

## YEAR OF THE GOAT 'The Unspeakable'

NAPAL

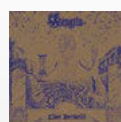


**U**nlike some so-called occult rock bands, Year Of The Goat are the real thing. Like their true peers, Sabbath Assembly and The Devil's Blood, these Swedes tap into the actual source of the genre when it was still young and naïve, resulting in a classy and very melodic sound that sadly will probably be not heavy enough nor aggressive enough for most. Instead of hammering their point home, these followers of the left hand path would rather perversely seduce the listeners, only to make them bite that forbidden fruit later – especially with complex yet beautifully arranged songs that have more in common with their home country's scarce yet mesmerizing dark progressive scene, as if Anekdoten were bowing down in front of Lucifer.

[7.5] OLIVIER 'ZOLTAR' BADIN

## YSENGRIN 'Liber Hermetis'

NUCLEAR WAR NOW!



**'L**iber Hermetis' is a compilation of Ysegrin's debut album of the same name and 2010 demo 'Alchimete'. Their sound is an almost seamless blend of black metal, melodic death metal and doom. The melodic approach that Ysegrin take makes them a lot more accessible than a lot of bands on NWN. The bass playing on this album is especially noticeable, the melodic bass line on 'Hors Dv Siecle' and overall style on the album is reminiscent of Necromantia. Of the two releases compiled, the album is the stronger of the two. The demo is primarily made up of the seventeen minute track 'Mysteres De L'Artifex', which is noticeably less focused than the shorter, riff-orientated tracks of the album.

[7] TOM SAUNDERS



**S**tarting off with some brand new shit, **Prowler** hail from Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, and specialise in horror metal. That is, heavy metal with a complete fixation on classic horror movies, and believe us, if you're a metal head that loves fright flicks, Prowler's first full length, 'From The Shadows' [SLANEY, 8], is just what Doctor Frankenstein ordered, being a total chugfest à la Meliah Rage and laden with more samples from films like 'The Fog', 'Salem's Lot' and 'The Thing' than guitar solos. Including a killer metallic version of 'Pet Semetary' by the Ramones, this is huge fun from start to finish.

Up in Seattle, **Fallen Angels** have tapped into that classic Bay Area vibe by enlisting Michael Rosen to produce their third album, 'World In Decay' [CYBERNYNE, 7.5], who helped shape classic albums by Testament, Forbidden and Death Angel. Similarly vital dynamics are at play here, with a lively mix complementing the band's furious riffing and melodic hooks. The technicality recalls Defiance, Toxik and Faith Or Fear, but Fallen Angels manage to summon something relatively fresh from these nostalgic roots.

Vancouver's **Titans Eve** also unleash their third album, 'Chasing The Devil' [SELF-RELEASED, 7], which mixes more traditional heavy and power metal into their thrash palette to impressive effect. They're at their best when pounding out some seriously slamming grooves, as on 'War Path', and sometimes stray too far into harmonious territory for their own good, but this should please fans of modern metal, and comes packaged complete with a well realised artistic concept.

Irish label Marquee come up trumps with several classic thrash reissues. **Abattoir** wowed the Los Angeles metal scene in 1985 with their 'Vicious Attack' debut [7.5], and it still stands up to scrutiny today. Yes, the production is weedy by modern standards, but there's no denying the aggressive buzz of their early Megadeth-style riffing, and the band capitalised on their appearance on Brian Slagel's 'Metal Massacre IV' by signing to Combat in the States and Roadrunner in Europe for two albums, before guitarist Juan Garcia went off to play with Agent Steel and Evil Dead. Not sure about the misjudged Motörhead cover, but this reissue is lovingly packaged with photos, lyrics and liner notes, so we'll forgive them such a minor misdemeanour.

**Sentinel Beast** are another often-overlooked '80s thrash band who get the Marquee treatment. Formed in Sacramento in 1984, they were also picked up by Slagel for a 'Metal Massacre' compilation (VII) and indeed for his Metal Blade label itself. Their one and only album, produced by none other than Bill Metoyer, 'Depths Of Death' [7] boasts a strong NWOBHM influence (the band even make a decent fist of Iron Maiden's 'Phantom Of The Opera') and a distinctive vocal turn from Debbie Gunn, who went on to front Znöwhite and Ice Age. Bassist Michael Spencer also went on to replace Jason Newsted in Flotsam & Jetsam, but don't forget that this was where they started!

Lastly, and bringing it back home to the UK, **Suicide Watch** have their debut album, 'Global Warning' [8] remastered and reissued by Marquee with ten bonus live tracks to commemorate ten years since its release, and despite the live tracks sounding rougher than a badger's arse, the album itself is still a minor, and very raging, classic in the much-maligned pantheon of UK thrash, heavy on thought-provoking lyrics and Jim Durkin-inspired riffage. The Ed Repka artwork has also been tweaked, so it finally looks as it was originally intended, i.e. amazing. What we really want next from Suicide Watch though is a brand new studio album – don't make us beg you for it, guys.

IAN GLASPER

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# EYEHATEGOD

NEW ORLEANS SLUDGE MONSTERS EYEHATEGOD ARE BACK TO CRUSH UK AUDIENCES, SO WE DECIDED TO TEST THE METAL KNOWLEDGE OF VOCALIST MIKE WILLIAMS, GUITARIST BRIAN PATTON AND BASS PLAYER GARY MADER. WHAT WE DIDN'T BANK ON WAS TALES OF RIOTS AND ONSTAGE MUTILATION...

Words: Ross Baker Pics: Rich Price



## CORRECTIONS HOUSE

'Bullets And Graves' FROM 'Last City Zero' (NEUROT, 2013)

Mike Williams sings in Neurosis' Scott Kelly, the omnipresent Sanford Parker and Yakuza's Bruce Lamont. This should be a simple one to begin with...

**Mike Williams (vocals) :** "Hey that's my band! That's Corrections House!"

*Do you know the name of the song?*

**Mike:** "It's an early one. Is it off the seven inch? I don't know." It's 'Bullets And Graves'.

**Mike:** "Ah shit, that's the one we always fuck up live because it's so fast! When you get behind the machine, you're fucked! You have to really concentrate. The new Corrections House is coming out in September. It's more straight forward songs. It's still strange as fuck!"



## DOWN

'Open Coffins' FROM 'Down IV - Part I' (DOWN RECORDS, 2012)

A recent cut from sludge superstars Down with EHG's Jimmy Bower on drums. Surely they won't struggle here...

**Brian Patton (guitar):** "Down?"

*Correct.*

**Mike:** "I thought it was Phil but I wasn't sure. It's gotta be newer."

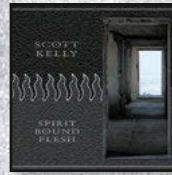
**Gary Mader (bass):** "I am thinking it's on the last EP?"

*It's 'Down IV'.*

**Mike:** "I'll be honest, I don't know what they put out. They're my friends first and a band second. I don't sit around listening to Down and Crowbar."

**Brian:** "I do!"

**Mike:** "It sounded a little different for Phil. That's his melodic voice!"



## SCOTT KELLY

'Sacred Heart' FROM 'Spirit Bound Flesh' (NEUROT, 2001)

More Scott Kelly, albeit with the Neurosis man in tender singer/songwriter mood on this a cappella number. How well do the guys know the voice behind the guitars?

**Mike:** [laughs] "What the fuck!"

**Brian:** "Let's wait till it kicks in."

**Mike:** "Is that Scott Kelly?!"

Yes! I am surprised you got that considering it's just a vocal track.

**Mike:** "He's got so many bands! Which one is this?"

*It's from 'Spirit Bound Flesh' his first solo album!*

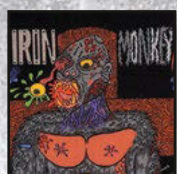
**Mike:** "I have lived in a van with him so I could tell it was him. He played me the Townes Van Zandt stuff he did with Nate Hall. That stuff is great."

**Brian:** "We're two for three!"

**"WE'RE FROM NEW ORLEANS, MAN. YOU CAN'T SCAM US!"**



# "WE DON'T SIT AROUND LISTENING TO DIMMU BURGER"



## IRON MONKEY 'House Anxiety' FROM 'Our Problem' (EARACHE, 1998)

A bruising slice of UK sludge from the celebrated fathers of the British scene, Eyehategod were a massive influence on Johnny Morrow and company back in the day. Will they recognise their spiritual brethren?

**Mike:** "Shit, man."

**Gary:** "Can you give me a hint?! Have we played with them on this tour?"

*They're a British band.*

**Mike:** "Iron Monkey!"

*You're on it Mike!*

**Mike:** "I haven't heard this before, is it from their second record?"

*Do you like it?*

**Mike:** "Yeah, at least they admitted they were influenced by us. We knew them before they started. Dean Berry came over and stayed with Jimmy for a month and recorded every record Jimmy had and then came back to the U.K. and formed Iron Monkey."

*Do you have any memories of Johnny Morrow at all?*

**Mike:** "I met Johnny but I never got to talk to him much. I never saw them live but I heard they were pretty crazy. We played a tribute show for him in Nottingham a few years ago. Unfortunately I never got to know him better before he died."



## LOUIS ARMSTRONG AND HIS HOT FIVE 'West End Blues' FROM 'West End Blues/Fireworks' (OKEH, 1929)

A little curveball in the shape of New Orleans most famous exponent of jazz. Growing up in Louisiana, Louis Armstrong's music must have been inescapable. Are EHG fans?

**Mike:** [two notes in] "Louis Armstrong!"

**Brian:** "We're from New Orleans, man. You can't scam us!"

**Gary:** "Right behind all the ragtime dudes there was Louis Armstrong

and Jelly Roll Morton and all those dudes. You can't escape Louis, he's so important!"

**Mike:** "We're doing really well. I thought it would all be death metal or something!"

**Gary:** "We listen to a lot of stuff. We're true musical intellectuals!"

**Mike:** "We don't even listen to metal that much. Judas Priest and Maiden but not much else. We don't sit around listening to Dimmu Burger and Cradle Of Freedos!"



## CONFESSOR 'Cross The Bar' FROM 'Unravelled' (SEASON OF MIST, 2005)

Eyehategod have long professed a love of North Carolina's primal doom stalwarts, but will they recognise a track from their most recent release?

**Brian:** "Trouble?"

*Nope.*

**Mike:** "The Skull?"

**Brian:** "I'm stumped!"

*It's Confessor.*

**Mike:** "I have got that new Confessor record on tour but I haven't listened to it yet. They had broken up before we got to play with them. They're part of that whole North Carolina thing with C.O.C., Honor Role and Breadwinner."

**Gary:** "Wasn't Pen from Honor Role in Confessor for a bit?"

**Mike:** "I'd say he was in there for a second."

**Brian:** "Pen has a new band called Bowl Ethereal now."

**Gary:** "They're a weird punk band."

**Mike:** "Confessor are great. A lot of people didn't like them as they weren't sure of the vocals but I love the singer. It was really different."



## BUZZOV\*EN 'I Hate' FROM 'Sore' (Roadrunner Records, 1994) Eyehategod toured with Buzzov\*en back in the day. Are their old comrades familiar? Just how out of control were their famously violent live shows?

**Gary:** "Buzzov\*en!"

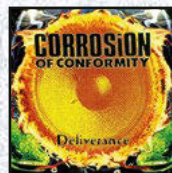
**Brian:** "I took acid listening to this band!"

**Mike:** "He got it during the sample! I could do this all day!"

*Any stories of touring with them?*

**Mike:** "We toured with them twice in 1993 and it was insane. A lot of blood, drugs and evil vibes going on. They had this roadie of theirs, Pat Grimple who would get onstage with them and cut himself and shit. He went to the hospital in New Orleans when he punctured a lung! Shit like that was common on that tour."

**Brian:** "There was a riot in Albuquerque it was insane. They changed line up so many times!"



## CORROSION OF CONFORMITY 'Señor Limpio' FROM 'Deliverance' (COLUMBIA, 1994)

A safe one to end on, Pepper Keenan's vocals

should be a dead giveaway here.

**Mike:** "[during the intro] C.O.C! 'Deliverance'!

**Gary:** [Singing along] "'I want to, I want to...' This is rad!"

**Mike:** "We rocked it! The only one we got wrong was the Down song. I thought the other track was Confessor so I got that right in my head!"



## FINAL SCORE: 85%

A strong showing from the New Orleans mob. They put in a tremendous showing in spite of Mike apparently feeling somewhat ropey...

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'THE ULTRA-VIOLENCE'

DEATH ANGEL

THEY WERE TEENAGERS, THEY HAD A ROCK STAR FAN IN KIRK HAMMETT AND THEY WERE PLAYERS IN THE ORIGINAL BAY AREA THRASH SCENE. DEATH ANGEL REMINISCES ABOUT THE DEBUT THAT STILL DEFINES THEM NOW – 'THE ULTRA-VIOLENCE' AND ITS GLAM ROCK PRODUCER  
WORDS: KEVIN STEWART-PANKO

**"It was fucking amazing!"**

This particular quote from Death Angel guitarist, Rob Cavestary was uttered in reference to the first time the metal-loving Filipino cousins, who came together as a metal band in 1982, hopped on a plane for a seven-week walkabout through the old world in support of their then-just released debut album, 'The Ultra-Violence'. However, judging by the excitement that still punctuates every word Cavestary uses to describe the mood, music and experience of the time, it's a quote that could apply to the entire era surrounding the development, creation and release

of the quintet's first album – let's say from the time they initially formed as Dark Fury in '82 to when they cemented themselves as one of thrash metal's leading lights come five years later.

It was a time of discovery for the teens whose ages ranged from fourteen-year-old drummer Andy Gaeon to old man rhythm guitarist, Gus Pepa, who was a rickety nineteen. They honed their craft alongside Matt Wallace (who eventually went on to produce Faith No More, Deftones and R.E.M.) on the 'Heavy Metal Insanity' demo, and some guy named Kirk Hammett who twiddled the knobs and offered

sage advice during the sessions that produced the 'Kill As One' demo. The proud, flag-waving Bay Area thrashers traversed the country for a handful of New York City fly-in gigs with only 'Kill As One' under their belts, signed to Enigma which was about as close to a major label as one could possibly get, and even had the video for the album's first single, 'Voracious Souls' banned in the land of the free for what MTV deemed "objectionable lyrical content." But let's go back to those eventful seven weeks in Europe.

"It was the first time we ever left the country, leaving our parents' houses for that long... and it



was amazing!" exclaims Rob. "You can only imagine what we'd try and do with ourselves! The shows were completely packed and sold out, seeing all those countries before the [Berlin] Wall came down at that age, all the different money before the Euro... we were on the loose with no authority around and, of course, no cell phones, no computers, nothing to keep us in check or in touch with home. Thank god we survived! There were so many countless, near disastrous experiences. We'd always get lost in other countries. We'd pull up to the venue and everyone would pile out and run off without knowing where we were. We'd go an hour walking down streets and running around and causing craziness before realising we didn't know the name of the venue, where it was and couldn't communicate because we couldn't speak the language. There were times where we'd almost miss the show; we'd get back right before we'd go on because we were lost for hours and hours. Kids today can't experience that anymore because if you have a phone, you can't get lost and there are online language translators. When you look back, you see how precious that is. You can never get that back."

The raw excitement the band experienced on foreign soil was preceded by as much home turf ebullience. Remember that back in the days known as 'back in the day', signing to a label and putting a record out was the biggest form of recognition for your musical art. To go record in a proper studio and have your music released on glorious vinyl wrapped in 12"-by-12" cover art was a far more validating experience than acquiring the latest software, recording at home, uploading everything to the internet and trying to unload a thousand CDs online – and Death Angel relished every second of those times.

"Emotionally, there are a lot of memories because it was our first album and that was huge; the excitement level and how proud we felt to do a real album. Back then, to release an album was much more of an official experience. That was huge for us; a dream realised."

Considering the ages of the band members, a lot went on behind the scenes in order to get 'The Ultra-Violence' done and released. Rob acknowledges that he and his cousins were restless and wild youths impacted by the hormonal changes, poor impulse control and spotty decision making that follows the onset of puberty, which most of the members were in various stages of. As we pause to let our readers with tweens and teenage children shake their heads at the prospect of what it must have been like for the band's parents and then-manager, Katrina Sirdofsky to lasso in the mayhem, let's get Rob's take on the typical happenings during one of the three days(!) it took to capture 'The Ultra-Violence'.



**"WE WERE ON THE LOOSE WITH NO AUTHORITY AROUND AND NO CELL PHONES, NO COMPUTERS, NOTHING TO KEEP US IN CHECK OR IN TOUCH WITH HOME"**

"We were surprised at how precise you have to be. What was important to us was playing as fast as we could and as intensely as possible. That's cool, because you're capturing that raw energy which can be hard to capture on tape with everyone around and with the pressure to get it right. At the time we weren't recognising that; we were just going in with reckless abandon and going crazy. So, all the grown-ups had to baby us, keep on us to get serious and to focus. That was something we were learning and not liking. We were bummed out that people were trying to squish our fun and get us to think seriously about the process and the professional way of doing things. I remember us being so rebellious against authority and grown-ups. We were like rebels without a cause and I love that you can hear in that recording."

"The producer, Davy Vain came into the picture because his band – the glam band, Vain – was also managed by our manager and she got him the gig. We'd be hanging out at her house and those guys would be there too. At first, we didn't like them because we were total thrashers and they were total posers – simple, and stupid, as that! But we saw them so many times and after a while we became friends. Davy was actually impressive because he was the brainchild of his band and was producing and writing songs. He played the ring leader and knew what to do with us and the recording."

'The Ultra-Violence' is a stunning work in and of itself; more so when you consider the progressive flair, smart song writing, muscular vocals and virtuosic guitar work came from the hearts and minds of what essentially were five kids. Songs like 'Thrashers' and 'Kill As One' still rightly feature in the band's live set today, there was the 'Voracious Souls' controversy and, of course, the little matter of the album's title track being a ten-minute long instrumental.

"I don't recall any creative resistance of any sort," says Rob after a thoughtful pause. "Enigma totally let us deliver whatever we thought was the shit. We just did our thing, turned it in and they were stoked."

"The thing I recall was my own reaction," he continues, thinking back to the day of the record's release. "By the time the album came out, I had started working at Tower Records. I was working the day it came out. I was behind the counter when the manager throws me a cassette of 'The Ultra-Violence' from across the room. I caught it and was just staring at it as everyone else was like, 'Congratulations, man!' It was amazing; a feeling like no other because that was the first one in the record store. For other people, it seemed like it was pretty instantly and widely accepted and it defined us in that moment."

"By the time we had done 'The Ultra-Violence' we had been a band for four or five years," Rob concludes. "That album was comprised of the best original songs we had at the time. Everything was a totally new experience and blowing our minds; going into a real recording studio, having that many tracks to record with, having a producer. Everything that is commonplace to us now about doing an album was absolutely a new experience that we, as kids, were going through. To us, it was a dream happening. We recorded that album in three days and we were just absorbing everything like a sponge. At the same time, I was totally naive and oblivious and partying and running around and not paying attention to things I should have. It was a combination of the two and you can never go back to that magical point in time." 🎧

**'The Bay Calls For Blood – Live In San Francisco' is out now on Nuclear Blast**  
[www.DeathAngel.us](http://www.DeathAngel.us)

# STAGEFRIGHT

EDITED BY KEZ WHELAN

ABBATH



SUVILAHTI EVENT FIELD, HELSINKI

## FRIDAY

Held over a backdrop of abandoned industrial factories, Tuska Open Air caters for the best metal has to offer over three sun-soaked days of the Finnish summertime. England's **Krokodil** unleash a barrage of riffs and growls to kick-start Tuska in fine fashion. With no clashes between the Radio Rock and the Inferno stage, the crowd swells for Finnish heroes, **Ghost Brigade**, who provide the doom and gloom of their signature style which, strangely, works remarkably well in the Helsinki heat.

Though the majority of the festival attendees are draped in logos covering all aspects of extreme metal, reactions to **Architects'** performance is mixed to say the least. Whilst the breakdowns are massive and frontman Sam Carter



ALICE COOPER

Words: James Weaver Pics: Katie Louise Needham

gives his all with incredible energy, the crowd just seems idle. Psychedelic rockers **Blues Pills** however give a performance that oozes in enough technicality to leave the crowd swaying in unison from start to finish.

**Lamb Of God** may be three years late to Tuska (Blythe's arrest in 2012 resulted in the cancellation of their performance), yet the band bring a setlist bursting with aggression and energy. '512' and 'Still Echoes' from the upcoming 'VII: Sturm Und Drang' sound even better in a live environment and the inclusion of fan favourites such as 'Vigil' and 'Hourglass' sends the crowd into a frenzy. They may have taken a bit longer than they had liked to play Tuska but judging by the smiles on the faces of the Finnish metal faithful, they will be remembered for years to come.

How do you follow Lamb Of God? By having **Exodus** deliver one truly spectacular set of course! The old-schoolers' performance is packed with energy, riffs and utter chaos. A nicely mixed set covering the band's latest record, 'Blood In, Blood Out' and classics like 'The Toxic Waltz' and 'Blacklist' ensure the circle pits last from start to finish. Headliners **Sabaton** utilise pyro-technics and comedic stage banter to full effect, giving a rather pleasant way to end the day. Yet their riffs feel stagnate at times and the ugly face of repetition rears its ugly head, souring what should have been a spectacular performance.

## SATURDAY

**Bloodbath** performances are rare these days and



LAMB OF GOD

the crowd is enormous in size as the supergroup give a performance that ticks all the boxes of the death metal formula. With a setlist comprising of all the band's studio records, latest vocalist Nick Holmes does an excellent job at replicating the band's studio sound, backed by enormous riffs and double bass drumming. With the crowd still recovering from Bloodbath's death metal assault, it comes as no surprise that the club stage is relatively empty for new kids on the block, **Shiraz Lane**. The Finnish youngsters still give their all with a sound that replicates the likes of Skid Row, Guns N' Roses and Mötley Crüe, and as the room fills, the crowd lap it up with great appreciation.

Australian prog metallers **Ne Obliviscaris** have become known for their love of experimentation on multiple instruments which results in a performance that is truly unique. The instrumentation is absolutely gorgeous and results in an added level of emotion to their already moving performance. Japanese old-schoolers **Loudness** practically bathe in cheese as they power their way through a setlist covering all elements of their career. It's classic and the beer-fuelled crowd love every minute of it.

With a setlist mostly dedicated towards classic record 'Tales From The Thousand Lakes', Finnish metal heroes **Amorphis** play their hearts out and the crowd revel in delight. It's no surprise that Amorphis are heroes to the Finnish metal masses.

Marking his first performance since the demise of Immortal, **Abbath** returns with a vengeance. Treating fans to a glimpse of new material with 'Fenrir Hunts' and keeping the Immortal faithful happy with performances of 'One By One' and 'Withstand The Fall Of Time', Abbath provides a iconic performance that leaves the crowd hungry for more. **In Flames** may have dropped the ball with their latest record, 'Siren Charms', yet the Swedish powerhouse pack an almighty punch with a setlist covering the classics. Opener 'Only For The Weak' sends the crowd into the frenzy and this trend continues throughout their set, showcasing that In Flames still know how to dominate a stage.

## SUNDAY

With only six songs (let's remember just how long **Opeth** songs are), Mikael Åkerfeldt and co. still manage to deliver a set of utter beauty. Riffs are pleasantly smooth and vocals are performed to near-studio perfection. Opeth have evolved into one of progressive metal's strongest characters. Closing the final day, **Alice Cooper** gives the booze-driven crowd exactly what they crave: anthems. Playing all the classics from his lengthy career, Alice Cooper is the perfect way to end the festival, with 25,000 people singing their hearts out.



# COVANI WAKE THE FUCK UP UK #2

THE UNDERWORLD, LONDON

**T**his benefit show raising medical costs for Decapitated's Adrian 'Covan' Kowanek eight years after the band's terrible accident was always going to be a noisy one.

Covers super-group **Nargis** get everyone pitting with blistering classics from Death, Autopsy and Terrorizer battered out perfectly. With six bodies including a clownish, green-haired, masked keyboardist going absolutely crazy on stage **Meta-Stasis** are a veritable blur of motion as are their mashed up songs. Throwing everything into the mix their mental approach is suitably brutal and the deranged stylistic shifts merging everything from brutal death metal to drum and bass gets heads spinning and bodies crashing on the dance-floor. By comparison **Desecration's** brand of 'Cemetery Sickness' is straight down

the line, sounding gnarly and gory in all the right ways. The trio get a big groovy sound and play songs like 'Sadosexual' about wanking too much in a display of tight, clinical instrument masturbation. Big circle pits are called for as **Ingested** slam us into messy oblivion, getting the crowd all worked up in the process. It's a choppy and volatile display with plenty of riff shredding and guttural vocals for those of us that can stay on our feet. With added Rottenness in the form of new singer Ben McCrow, **Extreme Noise Terror** bring crusty carnage as Dean Jones and co. blister through uncouth politico grenades like 'Fucked Up System' in style. It's left to a blistering rendition of Sham 69's 'Borstal Breakout' to wrap things up on a night that sees everyone united for an excellent cause.

Words & Pics: **Pete Woods**



# AHAB

+ ESOTERIC + DARKHER

THE BOSTON MUSIC ROOMS, LONDON

**W**hat **Darkher** might lack in sonic heaviness compared to Esoteric and Ahab, they more than make up for with emotional weight. The instrumentation could loosely be described as post rock and their set is equal parts gloomy and beautiful, with Jayn H. Wissenberg's delicate but commanding voice demanding the attention of everyone in the room.

**Esoteric** are bone-crushingly heavy, and have a surprising amount of energy for a band with such slow, long songs. They are by far the most unrelentingly miserable band on the bill, yet there is still plenty of beauty to be found in their funeral dirges.

**Ahab's** melodies are more pronounced than Esoteric's, but that doesn't make their set any less heavy. Their songs wash over the audience like the waves of the ocean, as they play a set which spans their career. Overall, all the bands delivered fantastic sets, with Ahab and Esoteric demonstrating why they are mainstays in the funeral doom genre, and Darkher more than holding their own despite being the odd ones out on this bill.

Words: **Tom Saunders**



# EXODUS + THE ENGLISH DOGS + EXXXEKUTIONER

THE ACADEMY 3, MANCHESTER

**L**ocal lads **Exxxekutioner** peddle a lively chunk of blackened thrash. They lose little momentum despite drummer Liam dropping a stick during their opening number. A surprise cover of Celtic Frost's classic 'Into The Crypt Of Rays' is also highly enjoyable. A welcome injection of fist pumping, bullet belt clad, blackened thrash.

**The English Dogs** suffer no such nerves. Pete Wakefield's nasty rasping on 'The Thing Will Arise' gets a few heads banging but these veteran punks' half-hearted attempt to incorporate metal into punk has little appeal.

**Exodus** get the crowd's blood pumping right

from the off. Returning vocalist Steve 'Zetro' Souza is on form exuding far more charisma than his predecessor Rob Dukes ever did. Kragen Lum is a suitable deputy for Gary Holt and the band even tease with a few bars of 'Raining Blood' mentioning "that other thrash band you know so well," before launching into a collection of bruising hits.

'A Lesson In Violence', dedicated to drum legend Nick Barker, is rapturously received before the encore of a bruising 'The Toxic Waltz' and 'Salt In The Wound' send the sweat drenched punters home happy. With 'Zetro' back at the helm, there's still life in these sturdy veterans yet.

Words: **Ross Baker** Pic: **Emma Stone**



## EYEHATEGOD

✦ SIEGE MENTALITY ✦ NOMAD

### SOUND CONTROL, MANCHESTER

**N**omad plough a furrow of infectious sludge doom. The group are an eye-catching proposition with drummer Hayley McIntyre's effortless cool further enhanced by bassist John Carberry's wide-eyed craziness. These Mancunians have fought diligently to forge their own trail in the UK scene and it's paying off.

Scouse crust punks **Siege Mentality** are far less immediate but their frantic bursts of anarchic disgust should not be ignored. Channelling unhinged hostility with a hefty measure of urban alienation, their sharp two minute blasts of nihilism win over several new converts.

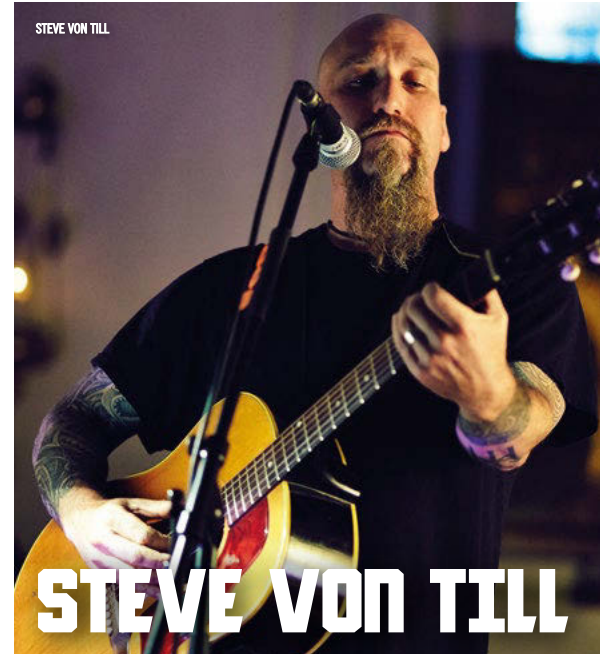
Once **Eyehategod** takes the stage, all else becomes a footnote. The incomparable

Louisiana powerhouse have endured many hardships from drugs, incarceration and the tragic passing of drummer Joe LaCaze yet the sheer power the New Orleans crew possess remains undented after all that has befallen them, wearing the scars like a badge of honour. Mike Williams is in fine form, cracking jokes with the audience who lose themselves in uninhibited abandon throughout tonight's incendiary performance.

Jimmy Bower and Brian Patton coax tar stained riffs from their instruments on 'White Nigger' and 'Blood Money'. Touting a catalogue of the highest quality with a live show to match, this seminal act remains more vital than ever.

Words: **Ross Baker** Pics: **Christian Ravel / Briana Norton**

STEVE VON TILL



## STEVE VON TILL

ST. PANCRAS OLD CHURCH

**A**t 10PM this Monday evening, the church bell of the ornate, dimly lit and very handsome building of St. Pancras Old Church begins to ring, much as it presumably does every evening. Yet with no little serendipity, it tolls a perfect minor third above the key of 'A Language Of Blood', which Steve Von Till is essaying in front of a rapt throng. It's an uncanny moment that can't help but sum up the stark and oddly life affirming métier of Von Till, a troubadour possessed of a primal power in both songs and performance that occasionally borders on the metaphysical. Soul-searching melancholy, gritty masculinity and rich reverb-drenched atmosphere are the order of the night – rather making one wonder if the music supervisor of True Detective has Von Till's number – and the gravely, existentially affecting strains of songs from his new 'A Life Unto Itself' hit home with both subtlety and fortitude. Comparisons to Michael Gira and Mark Lanegan hold water, yet perhaps the strongest influence on Von Till's earthy and sombre strains is paid homage to with a stirring cover of Townes Van Zandt's 'Black Crow Blues'. Yet for all its overbearing gloom and ceremonial sobriety, the charm, candour and sheer vocal charisma of Von Till make this evening a communion that could warm the heart of even the most disinterested heretic.

Words: **Jimmy Martin** Pic: **Leigh van der Byl**

## CLOUD RAT

✦ MOLOCH ✦ CARCOSA  
✦ BEAST AS GOD ✦ BRIANBLESSED

### STUCK ON A NAME STUDIOS.

**T**hough clearly suffering in the heat (the hottest day Britain's had in years probably wasn't the best time for this show), local sludge/grind duo **BrianBlessed** are just like their namesake; loud, boisterous and effortlessly charming. **Beast As God** absolutely destroy, their crunchy metallic hardcore sounding tight as fuck and deliciously vitriolic. Unruh and Integrity fans, take note! **Carcosa** play for about nine minutes in total, but their blisteringly fast techy assault delivers in spades. **Moloch** drop the pace with their tortured sludge but still get a great response, the malevolent, snail paced riffs complimenting tonight's main dish of blastbeats very nicely indeed. **Cloud Rat** go off like a nuclear bomb as soon as they hit the stage, with a set focusing heavily on new album 'Qliphoth'. Adding electronics into a more traditional grind setup can sometimes dilute a band's intensity (Pig Destroyer, we're looking at you) but new member Brandon Hill applies his waves of feedback very tastefully, as vocalist Madison Marshall runs into the crowd, screaming like a woman possessed. We may have sweated more tonight than the rest of the year combined, but shows this intense make it well worth it.

Words: **Kez Whelan**

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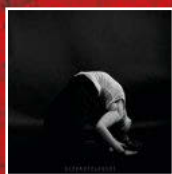
WED 23 MARBLE FACTORY, BRISTOL  
THU 24 O<sub>2</sub> ISLINGTON ACADEMY, LONDON  
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SAT 26 BUTTON FACTORY, DUBLIN  
SUN 27 ACADEMY 3, MANCHESTER  
MON 28 CONCORDE 2, BRIGHTON

# Mix Tape Mayhem

As **TRIVIUM** GEAR UP FOR THEIR HEADLINING PERFORMANCE AT THIS YEAR'S **BLOODSTOCK**, FRONTMAN **MATT HEAFY** SHARES WITH US WHAT HE'LL BE LISTENING TO ON THE JOURNEY OVER...



**“THIS IS AN ALBUM THAT WILL REALLY PULL THE LISTENER IN”**



**ALTAR OF PLAGUES**  
‘A Remedy And A Fever’  
FROM ‘Teethed Glory And Injury’  
(PROFOUND LORE, 2013)

“Altar Of Plagues summon a new form of darkness and despair unheard of before in the genre of extreme music. Unafraid to lurk in slower tempos and willing to utilizing droning tension building moments, AOP is a terrifyingly wonderful band.”



**WINTERFYLLETH**  
‘A Careworn Heart’  
FROM ‘The Divination Of Antiquity’  
(CANDLELIGHT, 2014)

“Winterfylleth has evolved the epic-nature-feeling seen in early black metal. Winterfylleth’s combination of melody, more grooving tempos and passionate screaming are a wonderful addition to the sonic onslaught they are so capable of delivering – and so great at doing.”



**SHINING**  
‘I Won’t Forget’ FROM  
‘One One One’  
(UNIVERSAL/INDIE, 2013)

“Shining is what happens when black metal is thrown into a futuristic, technological dystopia. Shining’s music conjures images of a Blade Runner/Mad-Max-in-space sort of world. Shining can be described as dirty, noisy, and fuckin’ fun. It’s black metal, it’s jazz, it’s rock and roll, it’s insane.”



**ALCEST**  
‘Voix Sereines’ FROM  
‘Shelter’  
(PROPHECY, 2014)

“The spectacular, delicate, beautiful realm of sound that Alcest have developed their compositions into can be deemed as something purely moving. Their newest effort is without question their greatest body of work to date. Wonderful.”



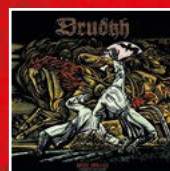
**MYRKGRAV**  
‘Sjuguttmyra’ FROM  
‘Sjuguttmyra’  
(EINHEIT PRODUKTIONEN, 2011)

“Myrkgrav shows us what well-produced, well-played and very well-performed black metal rooted in old Nordic traditions sound like. The clean singing is quite powerful, and paired with some of the best black metal screaming heard in a while, Myrkgrav represent the best of the best of tradition in black metal.”



**LANTLÔS**  
‘Melting Sun I: Azure Chimes’ FROM ‘Melting Sun’  
(PROPHECY, 2014)

Atmospheric and engaging is the new effort from Lantlôs. Within walls of distorted, yet melodic flowing guitar chords are haunting and melodic vocals and slowly pulsing drums; this is an album that will really pull the listener in and sway them within the pulse of the music.”



**DRUDKH**  
‘I (Cursed Sons I)’ FROM ‘(A Furrow Cut Short)’  
(SEASON OF MIST, 2014)

“The latest Drudkh finds the band channelling an unrelenting flow of what they do best. Drudkh is stripped down to the core elements of pulling off raw, emotive and energetic old school-fuelled black metal.”



**TAAKE**  
‘Nordbundet’ FROM  
‘Noregs Vaapen’  
(SVARTEKUNST, 2011)

“Taahe’s ‘Noregs Vaapen’ is a record that feels primal and vicious; sonically and musically. This album is also one that isn’t afraid to pull back and allow a simpler back beat in the drums, then ramping it up when necessary. The dynamics of elements in this album do have nods to the old school, but there are tinges of what many tried to do in incorporating an at times ‘rock’ feel to black metal, only done far better by Taahe.”

Trivium play Bloodstock on Friday, August 7th  
[www.Trivium.org](http://www.Trivium.org)



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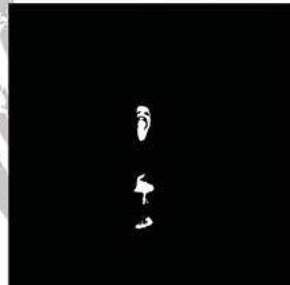
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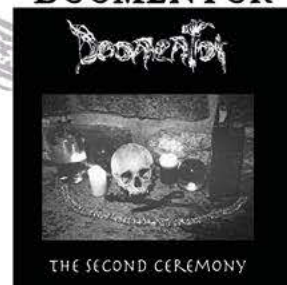
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